











R.M.I.C. LIBRARY	
Acc. No.	28609
Class. No.	22-VI-D
Date	7.9.60
St. Cat.	A.M.
Cl.	✓
Cat.	✓
Bk. Card	✓
Checked	

№ 28609 5

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

THE SELF IS NOT REALIZED BY THE WEAK

‘नायमात्मा दबहीनेन लभ्यः’

VOL. XXVII  
MAY 1940—APRIL 1941



PUBLISHED BY :

**SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH**

**MYLAPORE, MADRAS**

Inland Annually Rs. 3  
Burma Rs. 3-8

Foreign Annually Rs. 4-8  
(\$ 2 or Sh. 8)

Single Copy As. 6

**Editors : SWAMI SASWATANANDA & SWAMI VIMALANANDA**

**Publisher : SWAMI ADVAYANANDA**



THE  
**VEDANTA KESARI**  
 VOL. XXVII  
 MAY 1940—APRIL 1941

---

INDEX TO THE ARTICLES

	Pages
America, Religious Life in—, Some Impressions of— ... ..	61
Avidya and Adhyasa ... ..	466
Beyond, Vision of the— ... ..	44
Bhagavadgita, The Sadhana of the— ... ..	164, 220
Bhagavadgita, Metaphysics of the— ... ..	327
Bhagavata Movement, The—In the Maharashtra— ... ..	90
Bhakti, Sri Ramanuja's Conception of— ... ..	27
Blind Men and the Elephant ( <i>Extract from Udana ; Translation</i> ) ... ..	377
Buddha, The Ethics of the— ... ..	14
Buddha, Lord— ... ..	24
Chaitanya, Sri— ... ..	96
Character, Consistency is the Backbone of— ... ..	268
Dharma, A Layman's— ... ..	416
Dream, Lessons from— ... ..	229
Ecstasy Genuine, Holiness is the Test of— ... ..	292
Education, 'The Science of—India's Contribution to— ... ..	298
Education, Religious Factor in : Some Thoughts on India's contribution.	450
Evolution : Its History and Mystery ... ..	386
Experience, The Philosophy of— ... ..	181
Faith ( <i>Poem</i> ) Quoted from A. L. Begg's <i>Poems</i> ... ..	237
Falsity The, of the World— ... ..	133
Gangavatarana ... ..	378
Godhead, The Quest of— ... ..	337
Great Master, The— ... ..	383
Hinduism, The Synthetic Attitude of— ... ..	8
Hindu Mystics, The Message of the— ... ..	350
Hindu Society, Consolidation of the— ... ..	121
Holy Waters ... ..	243
Human Ends ... ..	115
Human Life, The Great Purpose of— ... ..	259
Kabir, Some Sayings of— ... ..	113
Kabir, The Sahaja Path of— ... ..	210

	Pages
Karma, The Law of—	185
Krishnaraja Wadayar, Bahadur ; Sri H. H. ( <i>Editorial</i> )	161
Let Me Abide with Thee ( <i>Poem ; Extract</i> )	321
Love and Hate ( <i>Poem ; Extract</i> )	441
Love, Dwivine : How to Attain it ?	471
Man, Threefold Nature of—	19
Man-made and not God-made	433
Maya, The Conception of—	46
Mother, Prayer to ( <i>Poem</i> )	107
Mysticism, Musings about—	56
Mysticism and Unity in Nature	410
News and Reports ... 34, 75, 119, 157, 194, 239, 273, 319, 357, 396, 438, 478	
Non-Violence	190
Organic Evolution, The Goal of—	402
Paramananda, Swami—	233
Philosopher, The Belief of a ( <i>Extract from Adams Beck</i> )	60
Philosophy, An Approach to—	370
Philosophy of Religion, a Study of Rabindranath Tagore's—	124
Prayer, Its Place in Students' Life	21
Prayer in Life, The Place of—	142
Presidential Address ( <i>By Dr. C. R. Reddy</i> )	425
Purushartha, The Ladder of Life According to Vedanta	212
Ramakrishna, Sri, Prayed thus :	361
Ramakrishna Sri, His Life and Message—	362
Ramakrishna, May Recall Us to That Which Will Make Us Men	372
Ramakrishna Sri, The Ideal and Pattern of Religious Aspirants—	173
Ramakrishna Sri, The Proof of the Validity and Vitality of Hinduism—	443
Ramakrishnananda Swami, A Letter from—	163
Reality, Trans-conceptual Character of—	109
Religion Relevant to our needs ( <i>Editorial</i> )	322
Religious Harmony	341
Religion, Who brings—into Disrepute ?	57
Religion, The Practice of—	85
Religion and Society, Early ; In South India	345
Rammohan Roy, Raja ; The Universal Man	265
Renunciation True, is Real Fulfilment	52
Reviews and Notices 33, 72, 117, 156, 192, 237, 271, 318, 353, 393, 434, 474	
Sandhya the, The Reform of—	288
Sorrow, A Few Thoughts on—	140
Spirituality, The Bases of—	253
Spiritual Counsels	312
Spiritual Progress, Aids to—	135
Spiritual Life, The Scheme of The—	129
Symbol, The History of A—	302

	Pages
Tamil-land, The Book of Books of — ... ..	203, 462
Tantras, Mysticism of the— ... ..	49
Tantras, The Religion and Philosophy in the— ... ..	249
Tantras, Science and Art in the— ... ..	177
'Therefore Fight, Arjun' ... ..	442
Thunder, Message of—( <i>Editorial</i> ) ... ..	41
Triad, The Blessed ( <i>Editorial</i> ) ... ..	1
Visishtadvaita, of Sri Ramanuja ... ..	418
Visishtadvaita : Two of its Great Teachers ... ..	332
Work and Contemplation ( <i>Extract from Meister Eckhart</i> ) ... ..	401
Yogi True, The Goal and Methods of the— ... ..	107

## TRANSLATIONS FROM SANSKRIT

Asia, The Splendour of— ... ..	5
Hymn of Victory, The— ... ..	281
Mother Divine, Hymn to The— ... ..	81
Saint, The Twenty-four Teachers of a— ... ..	241
Sarasvati, Sri ; Prayer to— ... ..	201
Upadesasahasri (Without text) ... ..	144

## INDEX TO THE NAMES OF CONTRIBUTORS.

Altekar, A. S. ; M.A., LL.B., D. LITT. ... ..	288
Aseshananda ; Swami ... ..	142
Bagi, C. S. ... ..	56
Bhakti Chaitanya ; Brahmachari ... ..	27, 466
Chandavarkar, G. A. ; M.A., M.R.A.S. ... ..	140, 416
Chidbhavananda ; Swami— ... ..	268
Dandekar, S. V. ; Prof., M.A. ... ..	90
Das Adhar Chandra ; M.A., Ph.D. ... ..	410
Das Kapileswar ; M.A., B.T. ... ..	337
Das Ras Vihari ; M.A., Ph.D. ... ..	133
Datta, D. M. ; M.A., Ph.D. ... ..	57
Gayatri Devi ; Sister— ... ..	233
Hart, Robert-Edward, Mon. ... ..	350
Holmes, Edmond ... ..	44
Iyengar Doraiswami, M. A. ; M.A., B.L. ... ..	113
Jagadananda ; Swami— ... ..	144
Jayaewardene, J. R. ... ..	14
Madhavananda ; Swami— ... ..	85, 121, 173
Maitra, S. K. ; M.A., Ph.D. ... ..	24, 164, 220, 265
Masson-Oursel ; Prof. ... ..	372
Mitra Chunilal ; M.A., B.T. ... ..	386
Mody Chunilal, V. ; E.A. Hons. ... ..	259



	Pages
Narasimhayya, P. ; M.A., Ph.D. ...	370
Nissreyasananda ; Swami— ...	229
Parekh, C. ; Bhai Manilal ...	61
Prabhavananda ; Swami— ...	96, 181, 332, 362, 418
Pratt, J. B. ; Ph.D. ...	442
Raghavan, V. ; M.A., Ph.D. ...	243, 443
Rajeswarananda ; Swami— ...	341
Raju, P. T. ; M.A., Ph.D., Sastri ...	327
Ramakrishnananda ; Swami— ...	163
Ramakrishnan, R. ; M.A., L.T. ...	383
Reddy, C. R. ; M.A., Hon. D. LITT. ...	425
Rhys Davids, C. A. F. ; M.A. ...	302
Roy, Anilbaran— ...	185
Saradananda ; Swami— ...	292
Sarma, S. R. ; M.A. ...	115, 345
Sarma, D. V. N. ; B.A., B.T., Ph.D. ...	298, 450
Satswarupananda ; Swami— ...	46
Scott, Mrs. Lottie I. ...	107
Sen Gupta ; Suresh Chandra— ...	21
Siddheswarananda ; Swami— ...	8, 129, 212, 402
Sircar Mahendranath, M.A., Ph.D. ...	49, 100, 177, 249
Srikantan, K. S. ; M.A. ...	433
Srivastava, S. L. N. ; M.A. ...	124, 210
Sundaracharya, T. ; B.A., B.L. ...	378
Syed, Hafiz, M ; M.A., Ph.D., D. LITT. ...	471
Trigunatita ; Swami— ...	19
Vijayaramachandrasurisvarji, Srimad ; Acharyadev— ...	259
Vipulananda ; Swami— ...	203, 462
Yatiswarananda ; Swami — ...	52, 107, 135, 190, 253, 312

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOLUME XXVII



NUMBER 1

MAY, 1940.

## THE BLESSED TRIAD

At the commencement of the new Volume we reverently offer our salutations to the Supreme Being, obeisance to the Great Ones, greetings to the friends of *The Vedanta Kesari*, and good wishes to all who toil for the increase of wholesome thoughts and things.

The three great spiritual luminaries, Sri Buddha, Sri Sankara, and Sri Ramanuja, have imparted a notable auspiciousness to May, the month which marks the new year for our publication, by their advent during this part of the year. Passage of centuries only brings to greater relief their brilliant influence upon subsequent generations.

The inexhaustible Buddha was an ocean of mercy and wisdom. The Upanishads that preceded him declared: 'Wherefrom can there be grief and delusion for the enlightened one, who in a united experience sees all beings as his own self?' Was it not this perception that made Buddha say, We will

suffuse the whole world with loving thoughts, far-reaching, wide-spreading, boundless, free from hate, free from ill-will. 'Even as a mother, as long as she does live, watches over her child, her only child,—even so should one practise an all-embracing mind into all beings'—so he admonished.

Indeed it was the deep wisdom of the Enlightened One that saved, though not so obviously, the treasured teachings of the Upanishads from being smothered by the unending tissues of complicated rituals. He was the morning star of spiritual freedom and emancipator of philosophic thought. He subjected the phenomenon of life to a rigorous analysis and discovered the nature, cause, and cure of sorrow, the greatest riddle of existence, and formulated his complete doctrine with mathematical precision. His uncompromising devotion to moral law is the jewel of Buddhism and wonder

of all times. No rationalist feels bold to doubt the utter sanity of his teachings, his perfectly psychological approach to the greatest problem of mankind.

The Buddha ascended the religious horizon of India on a full moon day about twenty-five centuries ago. Then a general intellectual unrest swept over the thinking people of the Gangetic valley, disposing them either to arid speculation or ferocious asceticism in their quest after the reality. That life is an evil was a common belief; consequently the things of mundane life, as they were fleeting, made no impression upon man; love and kindness, altruism and service, attracted little attention from the generality of people. Intense practice of ascetic self-torture, with no emotional motive for serving suffering creation, caused only callousness. It was then that Sri Buddha appeared with his Middle Path as a corrective to all those distorted tendencies. The earliest and the greatest civilizing force that was released on this planet flowed from the love and light of Sri Buddha.

But the Buddha kept wise silence over the nature of ultimate reality. Perhaps various conceptions of Reality were so widely talked about at that time, to the exclusion of doing anything good for oneself or others, that he might have felt that he would not add one more view—perhaps already known—to the existing confusion, and thereby distract the attention of the people from the right Path.

But even his spiritual regimen of simple life and pure goodness

invited interrogations. No pure morality can stand without spiritual sanctions and if the Vedic ritualism implied any philosophic content it was that man is essentially a soul, having a destiny here and hereafter. Buddha's silence on these points proved a fertile ground for several negative views in the succeeding generations. His own personal example of universal love and search for the happiness of all creatures grew dim after his disappearance. One of the reasons for it was his almost wearisome emphasis upon the sorrows and tribulations of mundane existence, which formed for his followers the chief theme to work out. Every body was anxious to escape from the burning house of *samsara* by rooting out the desire to be. A philosophy of unreality was thrown up in the next few centuries. The ethical edifice of Buddhism began to shake for want of a firm metaphysical foundation. It was, therefore, natural that the Vedic ritualism and philosophy, with its secure foundation in the concept of Atman that survives the body, and close adherence to the cultural treasures of a traditional past, re-asserted itself.

Buddhism was slowly becoming conscious of its failures. It emerged as Mahayanism and presented some of the Upanishadic truths in a different garb, asserting that the state of Bodhi or enlightenment is inherent in all beings. The Mahayanists designed a philosophy that satisfied the longings of the people by creating the conceptions of Dharmakaya, Paramitas, doctrine of Parivarta

(turning over of one's merit to others in compassion) and the like. Nevertheless they could not restore the confidence of a large number of intelligent people, as they did not subscribe to the sovereignty of the Vedas. A void was still left in the religious heart of India.

It was at that time the next luminary, Sri Sankara, appeared in the same white fortnight of Vaisakha, just a thousand years after the nativity of Buddha. Sri Sankara gave back to India the soul that was analysed away by the Buddhist speculators. He restored the reverence for the Vedas. He was, however, very solicitous to call also the aid of reason for determining what was the central purpose of the Veda, and what unimportant portion of it was to be relegated to shade. The sharp intellect of Sri Sankara soon detected where Buddhism failed, where the Vedic ritualism proved its inadequacy. His saintly personality, vast erudition, trenchant logic, mastery of expression, sympathy for all wholesome forms of religious worship, tender but suppressed emotions, surging enthusiasm, and practical sagacity enabled him to usher in a new order of things in Hindu India. He elevated the tone of popular religion, revealed its philosophical soundness by disclosing its source in the Upanishadic teachings, stemmed the welter of degraded Mahayanism by emphasizing the four stations and orders of society, and made clear that there is no escape from *samsara* unless it is through knowledge of the Divine within, engendered by the right

performance of one's higher duties on the earth. Under such a sunny creed the new Hinduism grew up luxuriously and absorbed the life sap of Buddhism into itself leaving its decaying stem to wither away.

Sri Sankara had to face an intelligentsia learned in the subtle dialectics of Buddhism on the one side, and the orthodox systems of thought on the other. He held the balance. While admitting the authority of the Vedas and the validity of ritualism in producing terrestrial and celestial welfare along with the Mimamsakas, he did not accept their puerile world-view which was laughed at not only by the Buddhist dialecticians but which was childish in the light of the higher teachings of the Upanishads themselves. So he had to emphasize repeatedly the higher Upanishadic world-view which no rationalist of the time could dispute. The Upanishadic teachings of the One, however, called for an explanation from him as it was *prima facie* opposed to the multiple, sensible universe. He had to supply it by admitting the category of Avidya with a Vedic meaning (for it was freely used by Buddhists to indicate the illusory nature of *samsara*) which must have satisfied the Mahayanists of his time, who were also using the same concept under a different term, *Samvriti*. There was similarity between the Mahayanic concepts and Sri Sankara's interpretation of the Upanishadic truth in some respects, despite the characteristic distinction that each one retained. But Mahayanism had to dwindle

away in India, as it did not inspire reverence for the Vedas, and as it degenerated into a mass of corruption, finally surrendering to the general body of Hindu spiritual culture the best it had evolved by way of ideas and practices.

It was Sri Sankara's logic, matured in the Mimamsa school, together with his merciless exposure of Buddhistic corruptions, and the general revival of the Vedic and Puranic theism as a pure religion under the patronage of powerful rulers, that won back Buddhists to the Vedic faith. Like many a great prophet and reformer Sri Sankara did not fail to take advantage of his immediate background, namely the one prepared by Buddhism. The times needed an intellectual emphasis and a revulsion for, or at least a discouragement of, ritualism with its glittering promises, to render his teachings reasonable to the majority of men trained in the academic discipline of Buddhist logicians. So Sri Sankara hardly thought it worth while to lay all emphasis upon theology, though he judiciously encouraged it where it was adhered to faithfully; for his mission was not destruction but fulfilment. Within the course of the next half a millennium this fact threatened to reduce his philosophy to a mere academic affair just as Buddha's psychological analysis of life and its evils came to be more exaggerated in endless tomes without translating to action the piety and compassion that went along with it in a very large measure.

It was at this time the last of May's Blessed Triad, Sri Rama-

nuja, appeared as the usherer of a new synthesis. Sri Ramanuja had enough to learn from the failures of the immediate past; at the same time he incorporated the best it contained to his system. Buddhism taught infinite compassion for all creatures and stressed moral perfection; but when the object of mercy as well as the pitying soul is equally fleeting, nothing but a bundle of sensations, how can there be a practical value for such teachings? Sri Sankara rectified the defect by disclosing with irrefragable arguments the eternality, immortality, and native purity of the self. But in his endeavour to make his position logically flawless he had to admit two orders of reality and reiterate that knowledge is the only means of Self-realization and that that knowledge is impossible as long as subject-object relation and ego sense persisted in consciousness.

Sri Ramanuja had to compromise in his logic to maintain the Upanishadic One emphasized by Sri Sankara by introducing modifications. But his emphasis on the embodiment of the Divine partially in the universe, which Sri Sankara, too, accepted in his own way, gave the doctrine of participation or Bhakti. Each soul is, as if it were, a living cell in the Body of the Supreme and the height of its existence and action lies in subserving the Whole. The dogma of *Kainkaryā* which emphasized the service of God in any aspect had deep ethical implications. It has been said that morality and pure goodness without spiritual sanction cannot endure. It is the very essence of

the soul to feel wholeness in serving other beings, because all are but part of the One. So love and kindness are not mere obligations but expressions of divine service. In building up such a system Sri Ramanuja not only had behind him the whole of Hindu devotion but also was able to utilise some of the doctrines, practices, and general ideas of grace, image worship, moral perfection, and other teachings already popularized by Mahayanism. Above all the conception of Incarnation of various types became very popular, and it fulfilled a deep longing of the Hindu mind. Thus by emphasizing the aspects which Sri Sankara did not stress so much Sri Ramanuja gave fresh practicality to the religious aspirations of India.

The nativity of these three great personalities falling in the bright half of Vaisakha naturally persuades us to think of them. They all showed a path and a pattern to humanity and strove hard to increase the good of all. Each one had to emphasize certain aspects of spirituality most required by his contemporaries. That naturally led to distortion in the hands of lesser followers, which required checking and a fresh orientation. The whole historic evolution of religion is nothing but alternate trends of correction, new emphasis, and distortion caused by overdoing. We today have the legacy of the best gifts of all these Great Ones. May we have the strength to live to the best of ideals set up by them. Om Tat Sat.

—EDITOR

## THE SPLENDOUR OF ASIA

The following verses are culled from the immortal work of the Kashmirian poet of the 11th century, Kshemendra. They embody the adoring tribute of a great inspired Hindu poet paid to Lord Buddha, the Splendour of Asia.

नमस्तुभ्यं जगद्धेशविषदोषापहारिणे ।

पूर्णायोदीर्णकारुण्यसुधासम्पूर्णचेतसे ॥ १ ॥

सत्पुत्राणां गुणवतां सर्वसत्त्वोपकारिणाम् ।

राजन् बुद्धमदीपानां रुचा विश्वं प्रकाशते ॥ २ ॥

Salutation to the perfect one who possesses a mind fully filled with the enlivening nectar of mercy, and who counteracts the vile poison of mundane misery (1). The world is illumined by the splendour of these shining lamps—the Enlightened Ones—who are the best sons, in whom every excellence abides, and who are habitually engaged in doing loving service to all sentient beings (2).

सद्भायः स्थिरधर्ममूलबलयः पुण्यालवालस्थितिर्

धीविद्याकरुणाम्भरा हि विलसद्विस्तीर्णशाखान्वितः ।

सन्तोषोज्ज्वलपद्मवः शुचियशः पुष्पः सदा सत्फलः

सर्वाशापरिपूरको विजयते श्रीबुद्धकल्पद्रुमः ॥ ३ ॥

Hail to Lord Buddha, the wish-fulfilling celestial Tree—Kalpadruma—that provides excellent shade and shelter; that has unchanging righteousness as its ring-fence; that has spiritual merit as the basin constructed at the root for manure and watering; that puts out branches and sub-branches extensively, reared as it is by the waters of penetrating intelligence, emancipating wisdom, and boundless pity; that has an efflorescence of spotless fame; that perpetually bears the fruit of goodness; and that spreads out filling all directions (or satisfying the hopes of one and all) (3).

ध्यानाधीनस्तिमितनयनः पूर्णलावण्यसिन्धु-  
नर्सावंशं विपुलसरलं सेतुभूतं दधानः ।  
मृषाशून्यप्रसूतरुचिमत्कर्णपाशाभिरामं  
कान्त्यैवासौ किमपि विदुषां शान्तिमन्तस्तनोति ॥ ४ ॥

His enchanting form represents an ocean of grace, and its very brilliance instills into the minds of the wise wonderful peace; his eyes are motionless in profound contemplation; his significant nose is comparable to the bamboo in its round smoothness, and to the bridge in its eminence; his plain beautiful ears are objects of charm, though they are bereft of all ornaments (4).

शिरसि सहजप्रज्यालोकप्रसेकमयं मणिं  
करिपतिकराकारौ बाहू कवत्कनकशुतिः ।  
करतलगतौ लेखां शङ्खध्वजाम्बुजमालिकां  
शममयमहासाम्राज्याह्निं विभर्ति सत्त्वक्षणम् ॥ ५ ॥

He wears on his head no other jewel but the natural splendour which streams out abundance of light; his majestic hands in its formation resemble the trunk of an elephant; his entire form emits the dazzling hue of purest gold; and on the palms of his hand are the imprints of a conch, a flag, and a garland of lotus flowers marking him out as an emperor—the supreme sovereign of the endless realms of peace (5).

दृष्टिर्वृष्टिनिवाप्तस्य महती सौजन्यमित्रं मनः  
क्षान्तिः क्रोधरजः प्रमार्जननदी दुःखार्तमाता मतिः ।  
लक्ष्मीर्दानजलाभिषेकविमला सत्योपयुक्तं वचः  
नित्यं यस्य स एव भगवान् जातो जगद्बान्धवः ॥ ६ ॥

His look may be likened to a downpour of immortal bliss; his mind is linked to generosity in the closest manner; his riverine forbearance washes clean passions like anger; his simple will is a veritable mother in effect to the lowly and the sorrow-stricken; his fortune is absolutely spotless, consigned as it is to constant giving; his words are eternally committed to the service of truth—Indeed it is he alone that is born as a universal friend (6).

शमश्लाघ्या कापि व्यसनविषदोषोष्मशमनी

सुधावृष्टिर्दृष्टिर्वैत भगवतः स्निग्धमधुरा ।

यया स्पृष्टः स्पृष्टं खरतरविकारव्यतिकरं

विमुच्यन्तः शान्तिः श्रयति गतमोहः पशुरपि ॥ ७ ॥

The Blessed One's soft, sweet eyes are worthy of all praise for its supreme calmness. Their looks act wonderfully like a shower of ambrosia in counteracting the summer of evil and poison of low cravings. A glance cast by those eyes compels even brutes to shed presently all baleful passions, and establish inner tranquillity that knows no infatuation (7).

उत्सार्य पापविपुलं तिमिरावतारं सद्यः प्रकीर्णकरुणाकिरणप्रकाशः ।

दोषापहश्च परितापहरश्च कोऽपि सन्मार्गमादिशति बुद्धसहस्ररश्मिः ॥ ८ ॥

The thousand-rayed Buddha, too, is a sort of a Sun; for he has annihilated the night (evils), chased away the sadness of the world, made clear the right path obscured by nocturnal darkness, and has routed the massive darkness of lowering unrighteousness by his dazzling and compassionate rays (8).

समा सर्वत्र भा भानोः समा वृष्टिः पयोमुचः

समा भगवतोदृष्टिः सर्वसत्त्वानुकम्पिनः ॥ ९ ॥

The solar rays fall everywhere evenly; the rain-cloud empties itself irrespective of regions; so too, the looks of the Blessed One, actively sympathetic to all sentient beings, is perfectly impartial (9).

सत्त्वस्मेरं सरसकरुणाकौमुदीपूरिताशं

शान्त्यै कान्तं सकलतमसां शुक्लपक्षे निविष्टम् ।

नित्यानन्दं परमममृतं निर्विकारं मृजन्तं

वन्दे तापप्रशमसुहृदं बुद्धपूर्णेन्दुबिम्बम् ॥ १० ॥

I pay my respectful obeisance to that Full-moon, the Buddha, whose smile radiates good, who fills the quarters with the light of sweet compassion, who occupies the light fortnight (the side of the virtuous and the good) to quench the darkness of evil, and who is charming, passionless, hallowing, eternally blissful, supremely ambrosial, and a friend to all in removing the heat of misery (10).

चित्तं यस्य स्फटिकधवलं नैवपृच्छति रागं

कारुण्यार्द्रं मनसि निखिलाः शोषिता येन दोषाः ।

अक्रोधेन स्वयमभिहतो येन संसारशत्रुः

सर्वशोसौ भवतु भवतां श्रेयसे निश्चलाय ॥ ११ ॥

May the omniscient one cause you permanent good;—whose heart is sparkling clear as a gem that reflects no alien colour; in whose mind, steeped in mercy, all disvalues are choked out of existence; who has destroyed the evil one with no weapon other than the virtue of being entirely free from anger (11).



रागो विषं विषं मोहो द्वेषश्च विषमं विषम्  
बुद्धो धर्मस्तथा सङ्गः सत्यञ्चपरमावृतम् ॥ १२ ॥

Lust is poison; delusion is poison; hatred is incurable poison. The Enlightened One, the Holy Law, the Spiritual Church, and perfect Truth, are supreme elixir, Amrita (12).

इदं सुगतशासनं प्रशमराज्यसिंहासनं  
वृणां व्यसनवारणं कुशलधाम साधारणम् ।  
मनोभवविवर्जनं भवविकारसन्तर्जनं  
मनोमुक्तुर्मारजनं सुकृतसञ्चयोपार्जनम् ॥ १३ ॥

This instruction of the Buddha places one on the royal throne which rules the empire of peace; it is the remedy for human miseries; it is the common man's abode of welfare; it saves one from the effects of lust; it scares away the evils of worldly existence; it cleanses the mirror of one's heart, and it confers on one an accumulated treasure of good results (13).

## THE SYNTHETIC ATTITUDE OF HINDUISM

This paper records a discourse given by **Swami Siddheswarananda** in French to a critical audience at Saint Mandé, Paris, interested in the spiritual culture of the Orient. The landmarks of India's religious and philosophical evolution are here briefly touched in their logical sequence to convey that a broad, assimilating toleration is the differentia of our spiritual quest.

We acknowledge our thankfulness to **Mon. Sauton** for the French document and to **Sri P. Seshadri Iyar** of the University of Travancore for this careful English rendering of it.—Ed.

THE dominant characteristic of *Bhagavadgita* is that it offers a remarkable example of synthetic construction. India has, from the very beginning, taken this view and it has preserved in the course of its history this same attitude which the *Gita* recommends.

If we go back to the times when the Aryans invaded the plains of the

Ganges, we find that they came in contact with a people who had already reached a high degree of civilization.

There was in North India, before the arrival of the Aryans, a great civilization, that of Mohenjodaro and Harappa, which, according to the estimate of competent historians, dates back to 5000 B.C. It is contemporary with the civilizations of the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, and the Egyptians, with which it presents a great affinity.

The Dravidians who inhabited the south of India also possessed an ancient civilization already much developed. And from the commencement, the spirit of the Aryans manifested itself in a tendency towards synthesis. The assimilation went on without constraint and in a progressive manner.

Let us now consider the spiritual domain. We find in the Vedas a conflict between different philosophical systems and different attitudes with

regard to the Divine. By the side of profound truths we find details which seem puerile.

In the documents which have come down to us from the remotest antiquity, we find that there is already a human approach. India, in seeking to attain the Divine, accepts all the means of approach which seem completely opposed and tries to unite them all in a synthesis.

We see, later on, some isolated criticisms raised against the rites generally observed. Then they manifest themselves in the protest of Buddha, which re-vindicates the true spiritual path—that of the Upanishads—and throws aside all accessory details, rites and conventions. In passing, we may remark that Buddha has played in India a role similar to that of Luther as regards the Catholic religion. But the protest of Buddha became itself an integral part of Hinduism.

On this occasion it will be proper to recall that Buddhism reigned supreme for nearly ten centuries. It made an indelible imprint on the continent which extends from Kashmir to Cape Comorin.

If we go to the root of the matter, we find that the Hindus had not abandoned their true spiritual household even though the great majority of them appeared to have been converted to Buddhism. This explains why they rallied back with much enthusiasm to the synthesis of Sankara, who, admitting as he did the intellectual constructions built up by philosophic Buddhism, allowed one to go back to the sources of the past.

Buddhism had preached against certain theistic ideas which are expounded in the Upanishads. The Upanishads represent a body of

scriptures composed by masters who desired to teach the Truth to their disciples and to perfect their spiritual development. But in the Vedas, besides a part relating to rites and conventions, there exists another part, more rational, which remained secret. This was transmitted from mouth to mouth to chosen disciples. Vedanta means the end of Knowledge. It is precisely this that the Upanishads teach. We find our true reservoir of Spirituality in the Upanishads. It is there that the veritable centre of our spiritual life resides. This is the lesson that the disciple receives when he seats himself at the feet of his Guru. Buddha remained faithful to the Upanishads. He accepted the precepts contained in the ten principal Upanishads, and we can state that there is no marked difference between them and Buddhism. It is thus that the teaching of Buddha is always alive in India. The opposition progressively vanishes and the transformation is accomplished slowly without the use of violence. Also India has never known methods comparable to those of the West (Inquisition, Expulsion, Crusade, etc.). It has gone back for its inspiration to the source, the Vedas. It has found in the Upanishads the best and the purest of the Buddhist teaching. Once more the spirit of synthesis played. Today you search in vain for a Buddhist community in India, but the spirit of Buddha is always present there.

The narrowness of vision which the Buddhist missionaries had propagated could not be accepted. It did not answer to the wishes of our nation. Buddhism, as it was presented, was but a means of approaching the Divine in a particular way, that of

reason (Jnana Yoga); and if we hold to reason alone, we have the right not to accept a personal God. We have to throw overboard all theistic conceptions. On the other hand, personality according to Buddhism is but an aggregate of perceptions, and the different elements of personality are cemented together by desire. Suppress the desire, and the personality vanishes completely. About the ultimate end of things, Buddha has wisely preserved silence. His great successors have formulated systems where the conception of God is totally absent. They have held solely to the way of reason, the scientific approach. They have kept themselves free from any particular dogma. The savant has to preserve a mind always open; and when one says, 'here is the final thing,' one lapses into dogma, and is caught in a net.

From the rational point of view, the attitude of Vedanta and that of Buddhism are identical. There exists, none-the-less, another point of view—the Supra-rational view. It is the domain of experience by intuition. We know that the domain of intellect has its insurmountable barriers; but the Upanishads speak equally of realization by intuition. Buddhism had left that in the shade, and Sankara reminded us of the existence of that way also. Once more the spirit of synthesis worked, and some centuries later the nation returned to Hinduism. The Buddhist temples were transformed into Hindu temples.

Before Buddha India had no temples. It had no particular rites belonging to a particular congregation. There were only family rites, the cult of the fire, the cult of the an-

cestors, which we find in all ancient civilizations. To consecrate the relics of the Buddha, to perpetuate the Buddhist ideal (Buddha, Sangha, and Dharma), people constructed temples where they preserved some bones of the Master. By these rites Buddhism was able to attract the masses.

Buddhist Philosophy is very difficult to understand. It necessitates a subtlety of mind which ordinary men do not have. It cannot attract any but the elite.

When India returned to the religion of the past, the statues of Buddha were replaced by those of the Hindu deities.

We once again find the same effort at synthesis in the Tantric aspect of Hinduism. In the 11th Century, we have the formidable invasion of the Moghuls. Under that pressure the plains of the Ganges were completely transformed in the course of a century. Two or three centuries later the great Empire extended itself to Mysore, that is to say, up to the south of India. Now the Mussalmans represent the Semitic Spirit. They have a great dynamism; from all points of view, they differ from the Aryans. One can even say that these two are types of humanity diametrically opposed. The Mussalman occupation has not brought a thorough overhauling of Hindu Society. It has only helped the assimilation. The spirit of synthesis played once again.

In the beginning we find some great saints and poets like Kabir who united Hindu mysticism with Mussalman dynamism. When mysticism plays, differences disappear. The barriers fall and in that state there is fusion and inter-penetration of

contrary elements, because mysticism is a ground of union where opposed aspects of conceptions can meet and be reconciled.

Individual efforts grew and widened and formed a group, and the synthesis commenced due to the Sikhs. The Sikhs formed a buffer state between Islam and Hinduism. They represented an effort to combine the two antithetic ideals. The Sikhs are neither Hindus nor Mussalmans. They have assimilated the dynamism of Islam and the mysticism of Hinduism. The Sikhs have remarkable physical qualities. They are tall and athletic. They are a people of fighters, and at the same time they have produced great saints. This has had very good results. But if any difference or friction appears among them today, it is due to the politicians who want to exploit and create disunion.

Independent of those attempts made with a view to unite the two cultures, other factors have also worked, namely, Christianity and the Western Influence.

Christianity implanted itself in India many centuries before the conquest of India by the West. India has had the honour of welcoming Saint Thomas, a direct disciple of Jesus. Christianity of the early centuries has been preserved in its pure state in Malabar.

In the course of the attempts made by the Occidentals—the Portuguese, the French, and the English—to possess India, the Europeans attacked successfully the Great Moghul Empire which fell in the 18th Century. It was then that British domination extended definitely over the whole of India. By English contact another new factor of assimilation appeared. Macaulay, who was a

great historian and a great minister, brought to India the English culture and the English language. The English differ from the Dutch who are afraid to throw open their culture to the Malayas in Java. The English have had this great merit for which they should be remembered with gratitude. They have allowed the Hindus to assimilate their own culture. This is why the young generations of India found themselves fifty years later thoroughly westernized.

They manifested a certain scorn for the Hindu culture. They ridiculed the state of meditation. What advantage could we get from meditation? We should not be immobile or inactive. All the efforts of the individual should be turned to the external world, in the Western fashion. The younger generation wanted to negate their past. They felt ashamed to speak the language of their forefathers, which they considered barbarous. Every one should learn English.

The consequence of these changes was that eventually the Hindus took into their own hands the direction of their interests. From 1800 to 1850, under the shock of the conquest, all the ideals transmitted through centuries from generation to generation appeared to be a failure. They thought that they should overhaul the past, and the enthusiasm of the new generation was directed to acquire the manners and the intellectual methods of the West.

But, despite appearances, the synthetic spirit which characterizes our race pursued its even course. Some great men like Raja Rammohun Roy recalled the Hindus to the fact that they should not consider themselves

denationalized, and that the same energy was present in our society intact in spite of our long sufferings. These sufferings should not be attributed to our Ideal but to our ignorance and social prejudices, in one word, to a misunderstanding of our own religion.

We find from that time, different movements which tended to renovate the Hindu society on a basis more extended. At the same time we must preserve the best in our culture, and introduce new elements on account of the penetration in India of the European spirit.

If we refer to the works of Romain Rolland, we find that Sri Ramakrishna, who was in one sense unlettered, had as his chief disciple, Vivekananda, who was himself very strongly westernized, and who possessed in a high degree the critical spirit and the analytic mind of the European.

Once more the spirit of synthesis did its work.

The Theosophical Society, which also played an important role in India, has to be mentioned in this connection. Thanks to that Society, Europe took interest in Hindu civilization and in the study of Sanskrit Texts. Of course they emphasized the study of the Puranas (Mythological Treatises) and left in the shade pure philosophy; but in some sense the interest in Indian themes manifested itself in Europe. The result has been to bring to the Hindus themselves a respect for their ancestors and their ancestral culture. It was then that the groups known under the names of the *Arya Samaj* and *Brahma Samaj* formed themselves, and from that time onwards they turned towards an exact understand-

ing of the Hindu original sources, the Upanishads and the Vedas. These great movements, which attracted the young men of the Universities, had for their object the resistance to the shock of the conquest and the assimilation of new western culture.

India has already two Savants who have received the Nobel Prize. They thus furnish the proof that the taste for criticism and analysis can develop among Indians. Tagore in the literary field has remained faithful to the Hindu culture in accepting the best part of the West. This is the Hindu attitude.

The *Bhagavadgita* has for its fundamental basis this same synthetic attitude. This poem is in itself a synthetic work. It brings to us numerous means of approaching mystic philosophy. Sri Krishna was the apostle of synthesis of different systems.

We may remark here that there exists a great difference between Hindu philosophy and the Aristotelian philosophy which has inspired all the European culture of the Middle Ages and has also given birth to philosophic Christianity. This latter proceeds in effect in a categorical fashion. In the presence of a dilemma, it does not know anything but a plain 'yes' or 'no'. Hindu Philosophy admits that the 'yes' or 'no' answer to two different aspects of one and the same reality. For Hindu philosophy there does not exist any absolute contradiction in Maya. On whatever subject it works, we search for a ground of agreement, to conciliate contrary views. We have to establish a synthesis.

In India this search after truth, this synthesis, is a pilgrimage which

can be made by all. There is no barrier, no boundary. Every one can receive the same pass-port. All have the same right to pursue on foot the road which leads to Truth. Those who have the energy, those whose nerves are strong, can take up the hard way of the *Jnanin*; but others who have not got these advantages are not debarred from borrowing other modes of locomotion, the carriage, the train, or the avion. The principal thing is to reach the goal. This is what the *Gita* recommends.

The Hindus have proceeded so far in this spirit that they admit that we can be spiritual without accepting the conception of God.

If we take up the Semitic view, we are forced to come to this conclusion, that without God, there can be no spiritual life. We have to remember that this is not a correct view. The spiritual way can exist independently of the concept of God. Buddhism is ample proof. Many people in the Orient live a spiritual life without accepting the concept of God.

When we take up this attitude there is no place for any quarrel or fight. We open ourselves naturally to a great toleration. We respect the beliefs and the concepts of our neighbours. The *Charvaka* philosophy is a great philosophic system written in Sanskrit. No other system is like it. It is pure agnostic doctrine. The Hindus have accepted that these theories could be preached even in their temples.

And as the Hindus have not manifested intolerance, there has been no reaction or violence. India has never known Saint Bartholomew. Such an attitude is fundamentally opposed to the Hindu Spirit.

To sum up, we find that as regards spiritual matters, India has always manifested the greatest breadth of spirit. It is in our social system that we have shown some narrowness. But it has been for us, at certain periods of our history, a means of protection. We have to guard our households. The Christian Missionaries know very well the force of some of our superstitions. For example, it is enough to touch the water in a tank; and the whole village which depends upon that tank will automatically become Christian. We also know that the Hindus who embarked formerly on foreign travel lost their caste.

By the influence of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda the Hindu spirit has repudiated this narrowness. From all sides—Gandhi should be particularly mentioned in this connection—efforts are being made to-day to break the superstitions of the past. The temples which had been closed to the untouchables have now been opened. The transformation is in progress. It works without violence, without coercion. In the course of ages we have accepted numerous foreign elements, and we continue to absorb them anew, while remaining faithful to the Vedic culture.

We can say that the true message of India is this synthetic attitude, this tolerance, this right which it gives to every one to speak, think, and live freely.

This attitude is also working on all planes of Hindu activity. It can be defined as the imprescriptible right, which a nation possesses to live its own characteristic life.

SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA

## THE ETHICS OF THE BUDDHA

**Mr. Jayewardene** is an advocate of the Supreme Court of Ceylon, Joint Secretary of the Ceylon National Congress, and a Member of the Committee of the All-Ceylon Congress of Buddhist Associations. In the following article he presents a brief, lucid, and systematic account of Buddhist Ethics.

Great founders of religions and religious sects all over the world have often laid great emphasis on the goal of their quest, or in describing their conception of it. But it is the most remarkable fact about the Buddha that he stressed more than any on the Path. The ethical pre-eminence of Buddhism is due to this unique circumstance, and it is amply evident in the following treatment of the theme.—Ed.

‘THE supremacy of the ethical is the clue to the teaching of the Buddha’ says Sir Radhakrishnan. We see this emphasized in the very first sermon that the Buddha preached. He began by asking his disciples to avoid the two extremes: vulgar and ignoble self-indulgence on the one side, and painful and profitless self-mortification on the other. He then outlines the Eight-fold Path which leads to Nibbana. It is only after he has shown the Way, which is primarily an ethical Way, that he preaches to his audience of the four noble truths, of the nature of suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the method of reaching it.

We can test the Buddha’s emphasis on the ethical from another angle. We can test the Path by considering the goal it leads to. The goal of Buddhism is Nibbana. ‘Even as the great ocean has only one taste, the

taste of salt, so has the doctrine and discipline only one taste, the taste of Nibbana.’ To Sariputta who inquired what Nibbana was, the Buddha replied, ‘That which is the vanishing of greed, the vanishing of hatred, the vanishing of delusion is called Nibbana.’ Greed, hatred, and delusion are not only the fundamental moral evils from which all vices flow; they are also the causes of all the misery of life. The eradication of these three is essential to spiritual progress, and the Buddha mentions the complete eradication of these three evils as the attainment of the goal. The attainment of the goal means therefore the attainment of moral perfection. If the goal is a moral goal, then the path must be a moral path.

That this is so is clear from an examination of the ‘Noble Eight-fold Path,’ which consists of Right Understanding, Right Mindedness, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Attentiveness, and Right Concentration.

### NOBLE EIGHT-FOLD PATH

The Buddha taught no other way beyond the Eight-fold Path, and within its confines we must seek for the moral code he advised his followers to live by. The eight steps in the Path may be collected under three main heads: (1) Sila or morality, comprised of Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Living; (2) Samadhi or concentration, comprised of Right Effort, Right Attentiveness, and Right Concentration, (3) Panna or wisdom, comprised of Right Understanding and Right Mindedness.

The order in which the different parts are brought into perfection begins with Sila or Morality. This is a condition precedent to the following of the other steps in the Path. Purity or virtue is absolutely necessary for the safe and profitable practice of the path of meditation and concentration.

'The path of meditation leads to sublime heights, where the rarefied atmosphere will only support a refined mind and body. Without virtue it is imprudent to begin the practice of meditation, for that way madness lies.' This is the view of Dr. Cassius Pereira, one of the few living Buddhists in Ceylon who practises meditation.

The path of meditation and concentration, which alone leads the Buddhist to Panna or wisdom, must be preceded by the path of morality, and it is in this path that the ethics of the Buddha explains and specifies.

The path of Sila or morality requires the follower to practise Right Speech (Samma-Vaca), Right Action (Samma-Kammanta), and Right Living (Samma-Ajiva).

#### RIGHT SPEECH (SAMMA-VACA)

Let us examine what the Buddha means by Right Speech. He has advised his followers to abstain from lying, from slandering, from abuse, from gossip. The Buddha's admonition against falsehood admits of no doubt. 'Let no one speak falsely to another in the hall of justice or in the hall of the assembly; let him not cause anyone to speak falsely nor approve of those that speak falsely; let him avoid all sorts of untruth.' The follower of the Buddha cannot knowingly lie, for the sake of his own advantage, for the sake of another's

advantage, even if that person be his mother, or for any advantage whatsoever. Truth is advised not only in speech and action, but also in thought. As the doctrine of truth is paramount, Buddhism has no room for falsehood. Yet truth alone does not exhaust the implications of Right Speech.

A man may speak the truth, but he may be guilty of slander, or abuse, or gossip. The Buddha has foreseen this possibility. He therefore advises the disciple to avoid tale-bearing and harsh language. He wants man to speak such words as are gentle, soothing to the ear, courteous, and clear. 'Speech at the right moment, accomplished by arguments moderate and full of sense' he says 'is like a treasure.' No code of morality yet invented has surpassed the Buddha's code of Right Speech.

#### RIGHT ACTION (SAMMA-KAMMANTA)

Under the head of Right Action, the Buddha's advice was intended to safeguard the life and property of others. He preached the abstaining from killing, from stealing, and from unlawful sexual intercourse. The high regard for life is carried to the furthest extreme in Buddhism. 'No living being should be killed intentionally', was the Buddha's injunction. Man's benevolence was to be extended not to humanity alone, but to all sentient beings. The water filter—one of the monk's requisites—is used to filter water, so that microbes may not be swallowed while drinking water. It is forbidden for monk's to throw the remains of food on green grass, because it may destroy the life of grass. The monk is advised not to go about during the rainy season, because in trampling



down the grass, which grows specially in that season, he may destroy its life, and because he may kill small animals which crawl about on the roads during that season. The severity of these rules makes it clear that the Buddha intended some of them to apply only to Bhikkus (monks), that is, to those who were leading the religious life, unattached to the everyday world and its problems. He realized that there would be many who could not lead the homeless life owing to social responsibilities. I shall show later how the Buddha enunciated his principles to apply to laymen, novices, and monks.

Right action also includes the abstaining from stealing. This extends not only to theft, swindling, blackmail, and other similar offences with reference to material objects, but it extends even to wrong interference with other's rights and business—to all acts, mental and physical, which interfere with another's rights. The ideal to be aimed at is that of a man 'who takes only what is given, with which he is content, and who passes his life in honesty and purity of heart'.

Right action with regard to women is an important part of the teaching. Sexual lust is one of the chief cravings of the body. As such the monk and novice are strictly forbidden to think, talk, or act, sexually. Any violation of this rule is a major offence and the offender is liable to expulsion from the Order. Laymen were not expected to follow such a rigorous rule. The Buddha advised husbands 'to honour and respect their wives; to be courteous and faithful to them; to hand over authority to them; and to provide them

with ornaments'. The wife is mentioned as the best friend that a man has. As a consequence of this importance that the Buddha attached to the sacredness of the home, it follows that he advised monogamy, the happy union of a single man and a single woman. He says so specially when he advises a layman thus: 'Let him not share a wife with another.' Separation or divorce is not prohibited, but the necessity would scarcely arise were the Buddha's injunctions strictly followed.

#### RIGHT LIVING (SAMMA-AJIVA)

'When the disciple, avoiding a wrong living, gets his livelihood by a right way of living, this is called Right Living.' The Buddha advises his followers to avoid five trades: trading in arms, in living beings, in flesh, in intoxicating drinks, and in poison. To practise deceit, treachery, soothsaying, trickery, and usury is also wrong living. The consuming of intoxicating drinks and drugs and the trading in such things were condemned because the practice of the Buddha's teachings involved constant mental alertness, which condition of the mind was frustrated by intoxicants.

We see throughout the Buddha's teaching emphasis placed on purity of thought, speech, and action as the basis of any spiritual progress. He mentions in his Noble Eight-fold Path the moral precepts already referred to. Over and over again under the head of meritorious actions or virtuous conduct he repeats the same precepts or different combinations of them.

For instance under the head of Dasakusalakamma or 'ten meritorious actions' he included: (1) abstin-

tence from killing (2) abstinence from stealing (3) abstinence from fornication (4) abstinence from lying (5) abstinence from abuse (6) abstinence from slander (7) abstinence from gossip (8) abstinence from greed (9) abstinence from hatred (10) abstinence from delusion. The first three refer to acts done with the body, the next four to speech, and the last three to the mind. Acting, speaking, or thinking in accordance with the 'ten meritorious actions' is to lead a life of absolute purity; for the Buddha here takes his follower into the very cause of evil, the impure mind, and he tells us that the path of virtue cannot be followed unless greed and hatred are avoided.

We have seen the Buddha's moral code, and we find it in no flaw except the difficulty of following it while living the life of a citizen. The Buddha realized this himself. He realized that there were many who wished to follow his teachings, yet found it impossible to do so owing to responsibilities acquired earlier. He therefore divided his followers into three categories: (1) the layman or Upasaka (2) the novice or Samanera (3) the monk or Bhikkhu. From the Eight-fold Path he extracted certain precepts and put them together as the five precepts or the Pancha-sila, for the benefit of the layman. The novice was asked to practise the Dasa-sila or ten precepts, and the monk had to follow 227 precepts.

#### PANCHA SILA

The Pancha-Sila refers purely to moral behaviour. It advises the layman to abstain from killing, stealing, fornicating, lying, and drinking alcohol. The layman must follow this simplest compendium of Buddhist

morality. It is obligatory on all those who call themselves Buddhist. It is not sufficient, as many Buddhists do, to recite these five precepts in Pali three or four times a day, like the reciting of hymns. The daily life must be lived in accordance with these precepts. Then alone can the layman call himself a Buddhist. He who as a citizen, as a scholar, as a professional man, in public or private life, follows these precepts 'will live the life of a householder with self-possession and will never meet with the king's punishment; the reputation of those who observe them, and takes refuge in them, will spread all over the world;'—so says the Buddha himself.

#### ATTA-SILA

The observance of three extra precepts enables the layman to lead not merely a moral life but a religious life too. On special days, full moon days and other days fixed according to the phases of the moon, the devout layman observes the five precepts already mentioned and three others namely: (1) abstinence from eating at forbidden hours (2) abstinence from dancing, singing, playing music, and seeing shows (3) abstinence from adorning and beautifying the person by the use of garlands, perfumes, and unguent, and from using a high or large couch or seat. These precepts are called the Eight Precepts or Atta-sila. When he observes these precepts the layman is partly leading the life of a monk. He abstains from sexual thoughts or deeds, irrespective of whether he is married or not. He controls his desire for food. He does not let his mind wander in search of pleasant, worldly sights or sounds. He does not think of beautifying his person. The worldly citizen is on

these special days expected to remove himself from the normal worldly activities. Duties of citizenship, duties of parent and husband, are laid aside; and clad in pure white, humble in manner and mein, the Upasaka learns to control his body and mind. He accustoms himself to lead the ideal Buddhist life, the life of a Bikkhu.

#### THE SAMANERA (NOVICE) AND THE BHIKKHU (MONK)

The Samanera or novice, in addition to the eight precepts mentioned, abstains from accepting gold or silver. He must observe these precepts not on specified days but right through his career as a novice. We see how the purely moral precepts of the Pancha-Sila, which the layman observes every day were added on to the religious vows of the Atta-Sila, which the layman observes only on special days. We see now how the novice has to observe both the moral precepts and the religious vows daily. These vows are intended to make his life as simple as possible.

From the Samanera we pass to the Bhikkhu. The Bhikkhu has a vast number of injunctions to follow. They number 227 and are contained in the *Patimokkha*. They comprise all the precepts observed by the layman and the novice. The Bhikkhu's life is made as simple as possible. If he observes the precepts meant for a novice, he is not bothered by the troubles of a worldly existence. The attachment to worldly objects, to bodily comfort, and money-making is eliminated. The Samanera and the Bhikkhu are free to devote their whole time and energy to mental development. They lead morally perfect lives, perfect in thought,

speech, and action. Morally perfect, they seek to realize spiritual perfection, which according to the Buddhist ideal is non-attachment—'non-attached to bodily sensations and lusts. Non-attached to the craving for power and possessions.' The ideal Bhikkhu becomes the ideal man, and such a man was Gautama, the Buddha.

As a code of morals, that portion of the Buddha's teaching which deals with purity of thought, speech, and action, is exalted, comprehensive, and unsurpassed by any other teaching. Yet it must be remembered that the Buddha really taught not of codes or rules or dogmas, for he condemned ceremonies and rituals. He invited criticism and free-thinking. He wanted the disciple to advance according to his own experience and ability. As such, in the last analysis, the Buddha's teaching remains a Path or Way along which he travelled and along which his followers must travel, if they wish to attain the goal he set before them. The code of morality only points out certain steps along that path; the very first steps, steps which must be trod upon before the higher heights are reached. Every step in the path is perfect, morally perfect. Though Sila or morality is not the end, though Samadhi or concentration is not the end, yet every step the follower takes along the Buddha's Way, every step being morally perfect, is the achievement of an end in itself. The following of the path does not, in its early stages, mean merely the abstinence from the doing of certain evil things. It implies activity. He who abstains from killing must also extend his benevolence to all living things. He who abstains from speaking falsehood

does not remain silent, he must always speak the truth. Step by step the disciple who lives in accordance with precepts attains the purity of thought. 'As a man acts so shall he be,' and with the Buddha's life as an example, the disciple attempts to root out from his mind the causes of the ills of life—greed, hatred, and delusion. He who has eradicated greed (*alobha*) and does not harbour it any longer; he who has eradicated hatred (*adosa*) and does not cherish it against any living thing that has life; he who has freed himself from ignorance (*amoha*) and attained mental wisdom—has followed the Path to the end. He is morally perfect as well as spiritually perfect. True happiness comes to him, for he leads a perfect life with a good heart and mind, shown in pure deeds, pure speech, and pure thought.

To those who are aware of the teachings of the Buddha it is clear that he set in motion the highest moral ideas any nation can have. Swami Vivekananda thinks that wherever there is a moral code, it is a ray of light from the Buddha. He is the only teacher who advocated the leading of a virtuous life without hope of earthly gain or heavenly bliss as a reward. His teaching is completely devoid of all selfish motives. The reward of virtue is virtue itself. Therefore the advice of Krishna to Arjuna: 'Find full reward of doing right in right. Let right deeds be thy motive; not the fruits which come from them.' The code of honour of the perfect knight, finds the fullest expression in the true follower of the Buddha.

J. R. JAYEWARDENE

### THREEFOLD NATURE OF MAN

**Swami Trigunatita** was one of the most daring and heroic souls ever born. A disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, he possessed most exalted spiritual attainments, and his spiritual ministry in the United States of America, as an apostle of the Vedanta Movement, in the wake of the Great Swami Vivekananda, is a significant episode in a great life, as he courted martyrdom there for the cause in the spirit of a Bodhisattva. Very few of his utterances are preserved for us. The following scrappy jottings of a talk of his, by a devotee, in 1914, besides being profoundly suggestive reveals a bit of his courageous mind.—Ed.

names—more than you can think of. Hari is that which purifies, which ennobles and cleanses.

Om is the all-pervading spirit!

The present does not exist: only past and future. The link is so indefinite and small. According to nature present is fleeting. Our object is to make it permanent.

\* \* \* \*

If our heart and brain are very clear, we can see that everything is made of those three elements: God the creator, preserver, and destroyer. He was in the beginning, is, and will be. Creator is one phase or aspect; He maintains, and again He will destroy—bring it back again.

**HARIH** Om! Hari is the most general name of God. God has innumerable

Life is indestructible, but changes from one state to another. Creation

first, then maintenance, and then dissolution of body. These conceptions vary according to stages of progress, but the conditions remain ever.

Preservation is a law of Nature; self-preservation—of body, of everything; dissolution is also a law of Nature.

When a child is born it is nothing but physical—there is no consciousness. From that, consciousness—or the present—grows. In the present is the life principle. When it is gone we do not know anything of it. Only of the present we know something, although that also vaguely.

Darkness is in all phases; of the past which is gone; of the future we cannot know; but when we know nothing of the present, it is most pitiable.

There is the body man, the sense man, the worldly man. He knows nothing but of the external world. He has not finished his course of lessons in this school of existence. The worldly man, the most ignorant, most selfish, man is at one extremity: the other is the man whose soul is always on the Beyond.

His senses will not satisfy his desires; one-minded, one-pointed, his object is one. He belongs to that which is beyond.

\* \* \* \*

There are the two natures of man, lower and higher. For lack of education man does not know that he is of higher nature. Then the man betwixt—when he has had many experiences; and when his education is finished, he goes beyond.

But he comes back the wise man.—Then he has his body, his mind, which belongs to this world; so he finds some contrivance whereby his body will be here, but his heart be-

yond. He eats, he works, he lives as others, but the real, the best part of him, is the witness.

The resident may be in the body, but his heart and mind are not there. They—body and mind—work, but the real part of him becomes witness. He is not the guilty party, but the witness, therefore is not contaminated.

He cares not whether Nature keeps him or takes him away. He is quite conscious. That is the *real* present; in spite of change, past or future, ever he is the witness. Neither in the past or future. A true man, a real man, must ever be a witness.

\* \* \* \*

The double aspect of man is good and evil. One part says 'Do' and the other 'No, don't do'. One part makes him do wrong, then the other part comes to show him the evil. Then the third part comes to correct. *Pravartka*, *sadhaka*, *siddha*. *Pravartka* is the beginner—'the maker of his destiny'; the doer; starter; the ignorant. The visible and invisible nature of man: first visible man goes on being more and more worldly. Then the *Sadhaka*—the controller, the disciplinarian, the steady, determined, soldierly, 'do or die' one—must come. The leveller—so that there will be no more coming again in ignorance. If there are clouds, they must be broken up. *Siddha* means the finished; the Perfect.

A *Sadhaka* is not a careless student, but a faithful, steady, earnest, fearless student; every moment on duty. It is true we must have done something or we would not be trying, or have an intention to find the Truth. Now we are seekers, and if the seeker be very sincere he is called a disciple.

Not a meeting-goer, or a book-learner, but a real internal worker. He does not care if the whole world is against him. He is not a disciple of man but of the Truth. He tries every moment to be one with It. '*Be one with It*' said Swami Vivekananda.

That disciple is settled, well-balanced, in spite of all shocks and knocks which try to unsettle him. That student's life is the middle man: he cares not for the past. He is working in the present: he cares not for the future. Let it take its course.

Let the past go: he lives only in his present existence.

And by his being steady in the present he comes nearer and nearer to his object, accomplishes his purpose, and finds the Truth.

Nature has taught him he has a three-fold nature; the first to be renounced; the last to be found out. Nature cannot deceive him when he learns this. He is doing his own work, not Nature; that work is the most desirable for man.

SWAMI TRIGUNATITA

## PRAYER—ITS PLACE IN STUDENTS' LIFE

**Professor Suresh Chandra Sen Gupta** is retired from the Assam Educational Service and now Member of Public Service Commission in the same Province. Under the caption of Prayer he makes a timely and thoughtful plea for the necessity of introducing practical religious instruction into the educational institutions. He rightly contends that fear of wrong and evil is the beginning of higher life, and that all things dubbed by modern man as superstition are not trash to be rejected.—Ed.

AN Ex-viceroy of India, while addressing a batch of students, once stressed the value of prayer as one of the four great qualities which must go to the formation of character. His Excellency wanted the students to remember that prayer was not a thing 'to be ashamed of' but was 'rather of inestimable value in all the troubles of life'.

How I wish there were many to repeat this advice to our young men to-day. As it is, I fear this voice

that urges the importance of prayer is like a voice crying in the wilderness—for does not the opinion generally prevail, and that, particularly, in the educated circles of the present day world, that religion may be banned without any detriment to our growth? The ancients and also the medievals needed religion to keep them going. But we moderns may very well take care of ourselves, letting God take care of Himself! It is an age of individualism based on reason. Religion is nothing but an apotheosis of our own rational faculty. A belief in the unseen as the motive power or creative energy behind all that we see is a characteristic of the ignorant and superstitious mind. It is enough if we have properly developed our own sense of right and wrong. The hidden hand behind the clouds, or beyond Olympus, or the Himalayas, directing us in life's journey, is a mere figment of the imagination, which, if cherished, only paralyses the normal powers

of the mind! Fear and ignorance of the primitive men were really responsible for the building up of the religious faiths all over the world through its different ages!

Ushered into a world where all was struggle, the newcomers, naturally looked outside of themselves for their guidance and while no previous knowledge or experience was there to help them on, our unfortunate pioneers had to depend on signs and hints spread out in Nature before their affrighted souls, tracing them all to the power or powers behind the trees, the heavens and the waters. A nervous and hysterical temperament shrouded in ignorance is thus supposed to be the most fertile breeding ground for religious faiths! A robust, matter-of-fact way of reading and interpreting the phenomena around us will lead us no farther than the world of senses. But is not this scepticism as dogmatic as the faith that is sought to be impugned? How may one, who has believed only in one's sense communications, never aspiring to go beyond, opine about a reality which cannot be known merely through the eye, the ear or the touch? The experiences and testimonies of men who have visited the farthest ends of the earth may as well be pooh-poohed by a stay at home youth to whom the ultimate reality means nothing more than the four walls of his ancestral home beyond which his indolent or self-sufficient mind has never strayed!

Not being a student of history or theology, I am not in a position to trace man's religious beliefs to their real source. But my humble experience tells me that religion is as much a part and necessity of my daily life as the food that I take. I never

ask myself why and how the first man took his food; but I take it because I feel hungry—the most fundamental fact of my physical life which I cannot disregard without serious consequence. So also do I feel my belief in God to be inseparable from my higher self, and this must be duly fed and nourished that I may live as a man.

Fear may have been at the root of this belief but this does not take away either from its importance as belief, or from its necessity as a part of man's higher self. For fear is not always a devitalizing agency. On the contrary, it is very often a healthy, life-giving instinct, which helps, if properly understood and cultivated, our growth as men. In the economy of man's moral life, fear holds an important place. Fear however is not to be understood as a sort of nervous weakness that shrinks from the wrath or frown of a Power, ever ready for mischief, but it is really a fine but rich delicacy of sentiment, which lies deep down in the subconscious state in the hearts of the good, that hesitates and falters, when tempted by wrong. Discipline, when enforced by a mere outward sanction, is not essentially moral; but when fear lurks in the heart as an indefinable sense of propriety which, irrespective of all considerations of personal loss or gain, dares not offend what is right, it comes to invest the rigour of moral life with its true beauty and meaning. The saying 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread' is not without its significance. The timidity that starts at, or shrinks from, a thought, or word, or act, supposing it to be wrong, is of a far greater moral value than the temerity that defies

all consequences, simulating 'moral courage'. And the more we develop fear as a right moral sentiment, the more it will help us in our religious life. And fear from cramping or stunting character, it goes to develop it rightly, smoothing down all its angularities and so sweetening it as to render it fit for communion with the Fount of all love.

Superstitions also have their place in a man's religious life. There is a superstition in avoiding superstition, as a famous author remarked. There is the 'educated fashion,' so much in vogue to-day, of laughing to scorn customs or faiths which had such binding force on the ancients. It is said that as they, in the past ages lived long and had little to do, multiplied all sorts of irrational customs to fill in their idle moments. But to ridicule a thing or a habit of life as foolish simply because it has come down from the past is again a superstition. As a matter of fact, we may not get rid of superstitions. Human life with all its light and science is still a miracle, a mystery. Even its ordinary phenomena seem to be wonderful to those who show a real anxiety to understand them. If self-effacement or religious devotion with its austerities, like fasting or sleeping on a bed of thorns, appears as a superstition to us, the gluttony or sartorial philosophy which shows itself in a nice selection of food stuff or wearing materials is no less so. If the giving away in charity all that a man has be a folly, the swelling up of his bank account without any other motive than that of hoarding is also a sheer stupidity. It is not easier to understand why one man should be denying himself even the

bare necessities of life than why another should be heaping upon himself much more than he really needs! Nor has the riddle of life been brought nearer to its solution in the mere expediency and commercialism of the present day relationships than in the sentimentality and sanctity of the old. But the dilettante's or charlatan's way of looking at life, who would judge it on the surface only, finding it irksome to drive deeper, makes a short work of life's serious problems by ruling religion out of it either as a superstition or as a hobgoblin of the weak mind. It is common knowledge how there are many to-day who flaunt their courage and modernism in a manner which would shock the older generations. They parade their love of licence as courage of conviction and their anxiety to avoid the rather perilous quest of truth as cheap scepticism. If any one amongst them prefers to skulk behind and be a 'coward,' he is dubbed a backnumber fit to lie on the shelf. In a mood of trouble or suffering, for instance, the best modern recipe would be perhaps either the 'talkies' or the 'movies', which would surely set at rest a clamouring conscience or a murmuring heart. But if any one be bold enough to reject this up-to-date remedy and prefer silence, meditation, and prayer, would he not be held up as an object of ridicule and scorn, absolutely unfit to hold his own in a world competition and stock-jobbing? No wonder when the accredited leaders who by their driving power are swaying societies and nations are found in some places to lay down *their laws as the only laws to be accepted and followed*, when churches are regarded at their best as mere



formalities to keep the social or mass conscience going, and when even as formalities they seem to be so many annoyances which must be removed so that more useful buildings may rise instead!

The need for prayer in a young-man's career while he is at school may not be over-emphasised. Is it impossible that our Universities should take the matter into their serious consideration? There are social and other amenities attached to every school and college. Sports, physical exercises, socials, etc. dominate the life of the student a little too much perhaps. While duly recognizing their part in education,

should we not also see that students may not forget their God? There are, I know, practical difficulties in a country where the religious faiths are so conflicting and jarring. But the essence of all religions, which is the same, may be brought into prominence. Hostels and messes attached to college and schools may provide facilities whereby students would find it easy to develop their religious leanings and *whisper their joys and woes, not to every stray visitor, but to the Friend who stands nearest, always ready to be taken into confidence!*

S. SEN GUPTA

## LORD BUDDHA

**Dr. S. K. Maitra, M.A., Ph.D.,** professor of philosophy, Hindu University, Benares, is the author of the *Neo-romantic Movement in Contemporary Philosophy* and other works. This brief article embodies the substance of a speech delivered by him on the occasion of the Birth Anniversary of Lord Buddha, and may be read with special interest at present, as it gives the gist of the message and personality of the Blessed One.—Ed.

TWENTY-FIVE centuries have elapsed since Lord Buddha was born in this country. But although twenty-five centuries have elapsed since then, the reality of his personality and the truth of his great message are felt even more to-day than they were at the time of his birth. For great personalities have this characteristic which distinguishes them from others, that they are timeless. They

live in an eternal present, where the distinctions of past, present, and future do not exist. Likewise they are not confined to any particular place but belong to all places and countries. We should not therefore be sorry that there is a solid wall of twenty-five centuries that separates us from him. Rather this may be an advantage, for our vision of him is not obscured by the presence of too many minute details. Dr. Tagore once said that it was perhaps lucky that he was not born in the life time of Lord Buddha, for if he had been so born, his vision would have been clouded by the many petty controversies that raged round him, and he would have failed to perceive his real greatness. We should not therefore regret the barrier of time that separates him from us, for this rather makes it possible for us to realize all the more clearly

the greatness of that sublime personality. The only thing that really matters is the barrier of prejudice and misunderstanding, and this barrier, fortunately, gets thinner and thinner with the lapse of time.

Buddha erected no monuments or temples; he conquered no countries nor subjugated any people. But the temple which he erected was far more enduring than any temple of brick or stone, for it was erected in the hearts of men and the conquest which he made was more durable than any conquest of land or people, for it was the conquest of the souls of men. This is why when the exploits of great conquerors, like Alexander or Napoleon, have been buried, and rightly buried, in oblivion, Buddha is still enshrined in the hearts of hundreds of millions of men.

This would certainly not have been possible if, as is sometimes said, his teaching had been negative. It is, indeed, a total misconception of his teaching to say that the two main doctrines which he preached were *nairatmyavada* (non-existence of the soul) and *nirīśvaravada* (non-existence of God). There is considerable doubt whether Buddha ever preached these doctrines, but even supposing he did, they cannot be said to constitute the main part of his teaching. The essential principle which he inculcated was the principle of Ahimsa (Non-violence) and Maitri (Love). There has never been in the entire history of the world's ethical thought a greater affirmation of the principle of Ahimsa and Love than has been done by Lord Buddha. No one has so emphatically declared, as he has done, the cardinal principle of his ethical teaching as the principle of universal love. On this is erected the great

edifice of humanism which is his crowning glory. Indeed his is the noblest humanism that has ever existed. Compared with it the humanism of the Greeks pales into insignificance, not to speak of the Western humanisms of modern times. Ever since Buddha's time, this humanism has been the keynote of all the religious movements in our country, whether of the movements of the Bhakti Schools, or of Sikhism, or of the great humanistic movement inaugurated by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

If there ever was a Prince of Peace, it was Lord Buddha. His great ideal of perfect peace and harmony among mankind, which it was the proud privilege of our country to have realized more than once, is today far more distant than it was in his time. And yet we talk of progress, and yet we boast not a little of our achievements in the present age! What wretched pigmies we are, compared with the colossal moral stature of this Prince of Peace!

Another great principle which Buddha enunciated was the principle of the inexorability of Law. The great truth upon which rests the whole progress of modern science is the principle of the Uniformity of Nature, or the Law of Causation. Yet this principle, as enunciated by modern science, is not half as thorough as the principle of Law as enunciated by Buddha. In the form of the doctrine of *patīccasamuppāda* or *pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination), it is perhaps the most thoroughgoing scheme of universal causation that the human mind has ever conceived. It starts with the question: What being there, what else exists? What happening, what else

happens? And Lord Buddha asked himself this question with reference to the problem of decay and death, and proceeded step by step from the effect to its antecedent cause, from that to the cause antecedent to it, and so on, till he came to the root-cause, which, in his view was *avijja* or *avidya*, that is, ignorance. In this way he arrived at his theory of the chain of twelve causes, which is known as *pratityasamutpada*.<sup>1</sup>

If there is any time when the world needs the teachings of Lord Buddha more than at any other, it is the present. The world seems to be thoroughly out of joint. Malice and hatred and prejudice have grown to such huge dimensions, that the very structure of human civilization seems to be crumbling. Man has come to hate man with an intensity which has perhaps never before been experienced. Everywhere we see preparations for the destruction of the human race and its culture. Even some great nations of Asia who were expected to live up to the teachings of Lord Buddha and to show the path to other erring nations, have not proved an exception. The only way in which the world can be saved is

by a return to the great principles of Ahimsa and Maitri inculcated by Lord Buddha. Hatred can never be cured by hatred; it can only be cured by love. This is a lesson which the world has to learn again and again. Not to speak of the international situation which is growing worse and worse everyday, even in our own country the forces of hatred and suspicion have gained the ascendancy over the forces of love and goodwill. The present year seems to be a particularly bad year from this point of view, for seldom has there been such a display of hatred and suspicion as has marred the history of the past 7 months. The two main communities in our country, upon the mutual goodwill of which alone does the progress of our country depend, have unfortunately displayed towards each other such intolerance and hatred as is simply shocking. In situations of this kind, we cannot do better than meditate upon the great truth of peace and love taught by Lord Buddha. Let us, therefore, take a solemn vow not to allow ourselves to be dominated by hatred and malice but always to meet hatred with love and malice with goodwill. This is the best way in which we can pay our homage to him. *Om Namo Bhagavate Samyak Sambuddhaya*.

S. K. MAITRA

<sup>1</sup> The word literally means 'arising after getting', from *pratitya* (*prati+i+ya*), 'after getting' and *samutpada*, 'appearance' or 'arising'. Vide Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 1, p. 931.

## SRI RAMANUJA'S CONCEPTION OF BHAKTI

In this article an attempt is made to give a rational account of the doctrine of Bhakti and to clarify certain disputed issues. Attention is drawn to the fact that Jnana and Bhakti as goals are one and the same, the one in no way being subservient to the other. The point is brought home here especially from the viewpoint of Sri Ramanuja, although no omission is made to adduce support from the ancient sages and even Sri Sankara, to maintain the validity and soundness of such a position.—Ed.

THE origin of Bhakti is shrouded in the haze of antiquity. However its rudiments are perceptible in the Vedas. The touching invocations to Varuna and Agni are sufficient to convince us that the ideas of Bhakti were not foreign to the Vedic Aryans. If Bhakti means to have resource in the Godhead, to have intimacy of relationship with the Deity, and to renounce everything for the attainment of divine nature, we have no need to search for its source outside the pale of Vedic hymns. The same ideas of dependence, faith, and love for the highest Principle or Supreme Being can be traced in the Upanishads also. The Upasana theory of the Upanishads fully develops the feeling of intense love for the Supreme Spirit. Such Upasana or meditation can be equated with what is known as Bhakti in later times. The doctrines of self-surrender and grace of God, which are more or less in an undeveloped state in the Upanishads, must have profoundly influenced the author of the *Bhagavadgita*. In *Vishnupurana*, 'Narayaniya' section of

the *Mahabharata*, and the *Bhagavatapurana*, the conception of supreme Bhakti to a Personal God, not motivated by any desire, finds its perfect representation. Later on we find how the cult of Bhakti was systematized in the aphorisms of Narada and Shandilya. So the facile theory of tracing the cult of Bhakti to Christian sources can be safely rejected as unsound.

Just like the word 'Yoga' the term 'Bhakti' also is used often loosely to denote different phenomena extending from the lowest form of hysterical manifestation to the ultra-sensual realization of divinity in man. The definition of Bhakti as explained by some of its great exponents throws much light on the subject. All these expositors emphasize that the loving devotion towards their object of adoration must be an end by itself; nothing short of this is acceptable to them. Narada in one of his aphorisms says, 'Bhakti is intense love for God.'<sup>1</sup> Bhakti, which is its own means and end, is greater than Karma and Yoga since these have some ends in view. Shandilya reiterates the same opinion when he says that 'Bhakti is deep love to God.'<sup>2</sup>

The discipline of the Path of Devotion insists that a neophyte should rise step by step in his steady meditation until he attains liberation. This final goal consists in his attainment of God, as his personality is

<sup>1</sup> सा त्वस्मिन् परमप्रेमरूपा ।

*Bhakti Sutras*, 2.

<sup>2</sup> सा पराहृत्किरीचरे । (1-1-2)

only a partial expression of God, the Absolute One. In the words of Swami Vivekananda 'Bhakti is a series or succession of mental efforts at religious realization beginning with ordinary worship and ending in a supreme intensity of love for the Ishwara.' Later on we shall find how Ramanuja interprets Bhakti as constant remembrance of the thing meditated upon, flowing like an uninterrupted stream of oil.

According to Ramanuja, immediate experience of Reality does not arise from the theoretical knowledge of the sense of sentences which originates only from the sentences. For instance, let us admit that there is something like nescience; then knowledge springs only after the cessation of nescience. But in our experience we find that the cessation of nescience is not effected by such knowledge merely. To use the classical simile, it is like the double appearance of the moon to a person affected with the weakness of vision. Here the wrong knowledge of seeing two moons does not come to an end even after apprehending the oneness of the moon by reason. So unless the cause of wrong knowledge, namely, the defect of the eyes is removed, the wrong knowledge cannot be removed. For this reason Ramanuja recognizes the need of experience for testing the scriptural statements. Hence he accepts only those Upanishadic passages which aim at inculcating a knowledge in the form of meditation (denoted by Dhyana or Upasana, and similar other terms) other than the mere knowledge of the sense of sentences. This superior knowledge denoted by Dhyana or Upasana and similar other words has the power to sublate wrong knowledge. The point which

arises here is whether the knowledge of Brahman as inculcated in the Upanishadic passages such as 'He who knows Brahman reaches the Highest'<sup>3</sup> is to be simply thought in the mind or to be constantly remembered. The performance of the act of knowledge once only is rejected, and the repeated acts of knowledge are recommended, as the uninterrupted concentration of the mind on a single object alone reveals the Truth ultimately.

All the Upanishadic passages which enjoin meditation must be viewed as concurring in significance. For instance the passage 'The Self is to be seen, to be heard, to be reflected on, to be meditated on'<sup>4</sup> aims at enjoining the meditation. The clause 'the Self is to be heard' is a mere reference to what is already taken for granted; the enquirer is not satisfied at what he has already established by some other means, and to make himself sure he fixes his attention on 'hearing'; thus 'hearing' is established. In the same way the clause 'the Self is to be reflected upon' is a mere Anuvada, which confirms what he has already heard. It is therefore concluded that the superior knowledge, which is the means of final release, is of the nature of meditation.

Sri Ramanuja's conception of 'meditation', which is steady, uninterrupted remembrance, like the continuous flow of oil, is based on the important scriptural passage which declares 'On the attainment of re-

<sup>3</sup> ब्रह्मविदोऽप्योतिपरम् ।

(*Taittiriya Upan.* II: 1.1).

<sup>4</sup> आत्मा वा अरे दृष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः ।

(*Brihadaranyaka Upan.*, IV: 5.6).

membrance all the ties are loosened.'<sup>5</sup> Emphasis is to be laid on the word 'remembrance', which has the same meaning as that of 'seeing'; of course the word 'seeing' is not to be taken in its literal sense as perceiving with our eyes, but to be understood as inner realization, which is of the nature of intuition. 'Remembrance' or 'intuition' has the same purport as that of the following Upanishadic passage which declares, 'The fetter of the heart is broken, all doubts are solved, and all the works of that man perish, when He has been seen who is high and low.'<sup>6</sup> In this passage, 'when He has been seen' is to be understood as 'when He has been realized'. It has been previously explained that 'steady remembrance' is 'seeing'; and now the purport of the above *Mundaka* text is to be interpreted as 'seeing' which has the character of 'meditation' which is steady remembrance. In this connection Ramanuja quotes the authority of the Vakyakara who says, 'Knowledge means meditation, scripture using the word in that sense'.<sup>7</sup> Hence it is concluded that knowledge which is only in the form of steady meditation, can be means of attaining the highest realization.

After declaring that 'meditation' has the character of immediate presentation (*Pratyakshata*), Ramanuja further improves his theory on the basis of the Upanishadic passage

which says, 'The Self cannot be gained by the study of the Vedas, nor by meditation, nor by much hearing. Whom the Self chooses, by him It may be gained; to him the Self reveals Its being'.<sup>8</sup> According to this text, not only mere hearing and reflection are insufficient but even the meditation is not sufficient to attain the Self, and hence the need for the further declaration 'whom the Self chooses by him it may be gained'. Now he who holds the Self most dear is most dear to the Self, and the chosen one means the most beloved person, as the Supreme Self becomes his innermost Self. To put it in the plain language, when the devotee attempts an intuitive realization of God with the help of his trained will and intellect, the Lord himself reciprocally desires that his most beloved devotee should attain the Self, as declared in the Gita in the following words: 'To those who are constantly devoted to me and worship with love I give that knowledge by which they come unto me'.<sup>9</sup> Hence he who attains this steady remembrance (meditation), marked by the character of direct and continued perception, which itself is very dear, for the reason the object remembered is such, he is chosen by the Supreme Self, and by him the Supreme Self is realized. 'Steady remembrance of this kind is denoted by the term "Devotion" (Bhakti); for this term has the same

<sup>5</sup> ध्रुवा स्मृतिः स्मृतिलम्बे सर्वग्रन्थीनां विप्रमोक्षः ।  
(*Chhandogya Up.*, IV: 2.2).

<sup>6</sup> मिथते हृदयग्रन्थिः क्षिण्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः  
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे ॥  
(*Mundaka Upa.*, IV: 2.8).

<sup>7</sup> वेदनमुपासनं स्यात्तद्विषये श्रवणात् ।  
(*Bodhayana Vritti*, 10).

<sup>8</sup> नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न बहुना श्रुतेन  
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते  
तन् स्वाम् ॥

(*Katha Upa.*, II:23).

<sup>9</sup> तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् । ददामि  
बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥  
(*Bhagavadgita*, X: 10).

meaning as Upasana (Meditation)<sup>10</sup>—says Ramanuja defining the word Bhakti.

Thus Bhakti, according to Ramanuja, is neither blind attachment nor mere emotionalism which finds expression in a frenzy of excitement. True devotion is spontaneous, and a real devotee always tries to control and conceal his emotional experiences. Bhakti, however, is distinguished by a lower and a higher aspect. The lower form demands symbols, ceremonies, doctrines, and spiritual formulas which help the soul in its onward march, while the higher or supreme Bhakti, which is suffused with intense love for God, makes the soul constantly remember Him, until it breaks all the bonds of mind and matter and realizes the absolute Ishwara who is the Soul of its soul. Sri Ramakrishna says, 'Prema or ecstatic love comes not before the realization of God'. ॥ १८८१

Bhakti cannot be roused by occasional meditations on the Divine, or by mere extraneous influences such as music, dance, or hypnotic forces. It is not unusual to find pseudo-mystics, who may pass into artificial trances induced by peculiar devices, indulge in practices which a truly spiritual man would never think of. The devotee who has tasted the nectar of Divine bliss finds no happiness in the carnal pleasures of the temporal world. The test of real Bhakti is purity, strength, and universal love for all animate objects. The first requirement is control of the senses; then realization of God would follow. Hence Ramanuja inculcates severe

self-discipline for the attainment of Bhakti, which includes *Viveka* or discrimination of food, *Vimoka* or freedom from all attachment to desires, *Abhyasa* or constant absorption in the thought of God, *Kriya* or good actions, *Kalyana* or virtues such as truthfulness, sincerity, compassion, charity, non-violence, and absence of covetousness, *Anavasada* or freedom from downcast moods, and *Anuddharsha* or absence of too much exultation. The royal road to Bhakti will be open only when a person fulfils all the above qualifications, not otherwise. On the other hand, it is also true to say when once a person obtains love of God, the control of senses will come of its own accord. Then and then only the supreme Bhakti, which is in the form of meditation, comes as a sense of communion with the Supreme Spirit.

There is a tendency among some interpreters of Knowledge to hold that Bhakti is only an instrument of Jnana, and similarly on the part of the advocates of the school of Devotion to hold Jnana as a means of attainment. It appears that neither Shankara nor Ramanuja can be accused of such a partial treatment of Jnana and Bhakti. Swami Vivekananda says in his telling phrase, 'To my mind this is a distinction without much difference. As a matter of fact, Bhakti, when used to signify an instrument only, really means a lower form of worship, and the higher form of realization becomes inseparable from this lower form of worship at a later stage. And the fact that each lays great stress upon his own peculiar method of worship, is because they both forget that with perfect love true knowledge is bound to come, even though it be unsought, and that

<sup>10</sup> एवंरूपा ध्रुवानुसृतिरेव भक्तिशब्देनाभिधीयते  
उपासनपर्यायित्वम् । भक्तिशब्दस्य ।

(Sribhashya, I: 1).

from perfect knowledge, true love is inseparable'.

When Shankara says, 'A person is devoted to a king, if he follows him with a mind steadily set on him' (*Vedanta Sūtras*, IV: 1.1), it cannot be taken that he is giving the definition of Para-Bhakti in its highest sense, because the term 'devotion' is defined as we use it in our ordinary parlance. Shankara in his *Bhashya* on the *Bhagavadgita* pointedly draws attention to the fact that the consummation of Knowledge can be attained by Devotion also. He makes no difference between Jnana-Nishtha and Para-Bhakti as elucidated by him in the following passage: 'This Jnana-Nishtha is referred to as the Supreme or fourth kind of devotion, Bhakti, (*Gita*, VIII.17)—supreme as compared with the remaining three kinds of Devotion;....By this supreme devotion the aspirant knows the Lord as He is....Thus there is no contradiction involved in the statement that "by the Devotion of knowledge the aspirant knows me".'<sup>11</sup>

It is true Ramanuja sometimes uses the term 'Jnana', as a lower phase of meditation in which the individual realizes his nature in relation to the physical environment. Yet this does not complete his definition of Jnana, as the word is used only in a secondary sense. If Knowledge and Love are means to a particular end, and if the final release is the end of both Bhakti and Jnana,

how can be one above the other? A course of spiritual discipline, according to the innate tendencies of the aspirant, having the same end in view, may be known by different names, because of the variation in the method. Without sacrificing what is characteristic to each of the methods, one may find the points of agreement in their fundamentals. In this connection it is very instructive to quote the following beautiful and wise maxim of Sri Ramakrishna which is full of spiritual value: he says, 'Pure Knowledge and pure Love are both one and the same. The same Being whom the Vedantins call Brahman, is called Atman by the Yogis, and Bhagavan by the Bhaktas. One and the same Brahmin is called "priest" when he conducts worship, and "cook" when he is employed in the kitchen'. Bearing this in mind it will be easy to understand how Ramanuja identifies the verbs *Vid*, *Upas*, and *Dhyai* as essentially one in their meaning.

He says in his disquisition on the *Vedanta-Sūtras*, '....the teaching of scripture is conveyed by means of the term "knowing" (*Vedana*), which is synonymous with meditating (*Dhyana*, *Upasana*). That these terms are so synonymous appears from the fact that the verbs *Vid*, *Upas*, *Dhyai*, are in one and the same text used with reference to one and the same object of knowledge. A text begins "Let him meditate (*Upasita*) on mind as Brahman" and concludes "He who knows (*veda*) this shines, warms" (*Chhandogya Upa.*, III: 18). In the same way the knowledge of Raikva is at first referred to by means of *Vid*, "He who knows (*Veda*) what he knows is thus spoken of by me", and

११ सेयं ज्ञाननिष्ठा आर्त्तादिभक्तिप्रयापेक्षया परा चतुर्थी भक्तिरित्युक्ता । तया परया भक्त्या भगवन्तं तत्त्वतोऽभिजानाति, यदनन्तरमेव ईश्वरक्षेत्रज्ञ-भेदबुद्धिरशेषतो निवर्तते । अतो ज्ञाननिष्ठालक्षणया भक्त्या मामभिजानातीति वचनं न विरुध्यते ।

Shankara's *Bhashya* on *Gita*, XVIII: 55.



further on by means of *Upas*, "Teach me the deity on which you meditate" (*C'hhandogya Upa.*, IV: 1.2). Similarly texts which have the same meaning as the text, "He who, knows the Brahman reaches the Highest" viz. "The Self should be seen, be heard, be reflected on, be meditated upon"—"Then he sees him meditating on him as without parts" (*Mundaka Upa.*, III: 1.8), and others use the verb *Dhyai* to express the meaning of *Vid*. Now *Dhyai* means to think of something not in the way of mere representation, but in the way of continued representation. And *Upas* has the same meaning; for we see it used in the sense of thinking with uninterrupted concentration of the mind on one object. We therefore conclude that as the verb '*vid*' is used interchangeably with *Dhyai* and *Upas*, the mental activity referred to in the texts such as "He knows Brahman" and the like is an often-repeated continuous representation<sup>12</sup> (*Sribhashya*, IV: 1.1).

The purport of the above passage from the *Sribhashya* is sufficient to show that Ramanuja did not make any distinction between Jnana and Dhyana. Words do not always connote or denote the correct implication and the confusion is more so, if they are divorced from the meaning of the particular context. To a person endowed with synthetic vision it is not impossible to arrive at the

common basis of apparently different concepts.

Intuition of reality, which is more than mere logic and ethics, is possible only in meditation which has the character of devotion. The realization which dawns in meditation cannot be brushed aside as the figment of some mystic experience. For, a real mystic experience requires a strict training of the will and intellect. A Sadhaka has to rely upon reason in his pursuit; but as he progresses in his spiritual life, he comes to attain realizations which are not a negation of reason but an amplification of his rudimentary power of reason on a higher, truer, and more intimate plane. Therefore the experience of a true mystic is not in any way prejudicial to the conception of Reality arrived at by reasonable and scientific methods.

Before Ramanuja the path of devotion undoubtedly produced innumerable spiritual giants who attained the goal of their existence. But none had cared to support Bhakti on Vedic authority. It is one of the daring attempts of Ramanuja in the field of thought that he not only gave a philosophic exposition of Bhakti but also conspicuously supported it on the teachings of the Upanishads. It is no exaggeration to say that he is the solitary 'morning star' through whom Bhakti shone in a true philosophic setting.

<sup>12</sup> Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XLVIII

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**Eastern Religions and Western Thought:** By S. RADHAKRISHNAN.  
PUBLISHED BY THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS. PAGES 394. PRICE 15 SII.

The above book is a collection of nine lectures given by Sir S. Radhakrishnan during the years 1936-1938. It is quite in the fitness of things that India's cultural ambassador to the West should have thought of mobilising the wisdom of the world when other forms of mobilisation are undermining the very structure of Western civilisation. Being the first occupant of the Chair of Eastern Religion and Ethics at Oxford, the learned Professor has rightly taken up the task of presenting to the world the beauties of Eastern Culture. In the words of the author himself "the supreme task of our generation is to give a soul to the growing world-consciousness, to develop ideas and institutions necessary for the creative expression of the World-Soul, to transmit these loyalties and impulses to future generations and train them into world citizens. To this great work of creating a new pattern of living, some of the fundamental insights of Eastern Religions, especially Hinduism and Buddhism, seem to be particularly relevant, and an attempt is made in these lectures to indicate them." Though primarily "intended more for the larger public interested in the higher pursuits of the mind and problems of human culture and living than the professional student of philosophy," we dare say that even the latter will find in these much that is original as well as stimulating and profitable. The scholar will certainly be astonished at the wide ground traversed by the lectures, and the penetrating insight of the Professor into the fundamentals of human culture and civilisation. To the Indian reader the book must certainly be a revelation in as much as it must certainly open his eyes to the defects of that Western culture which he has hug to his bosom as the saviour of his nation and culture, and must set him thinking furiously as to how to put his own house in order, not on the shifting

sands of western materialism, but on the sure spiritual foundations provided by the insight of his own ancestors.

The first lecture entitled "The world's Unborn Soul" forms a fitting introduction to the series that follow. It is a reprint of the inaugural lecture given by him before the Oxford University, immediately after his appointment to the Chair of Eastern Religions and Ethics. Herein it is pointed out that modern civilisation, with its emphasis on rationalistic philosophy, humanistic ethics, national politics and intolerent religion, cannot escape the fate of its Greek and Roman predecessors, unless it is prepared to benefit by its contact with Hindu Culture based upon spiritual realities. In the next lecture—"The Supreme Spiritual Ideal—The Hindu View"—delivered before the World Congress of Faiths at Queen's Hall, London, the uniqueness of Hindu culture is pointed out, in as much as it is based on spiritual experience, which is not in any way inconsistent with the demands of reason. The third lecture entitled "Mysticism and Ethics in Hindu Thought" is an Exposition of the Hindu View of the intimate relation between spiritual realisation and ethical life, between inner perfection and outer activity, wherein the author points out that spiritual insight is more important than morality, and that perfection is more than progress. The next four lectures attempt the historical and comparative study of Western Religious thought, past and present, so as to bring out how India has helped the western world through her invaluable spiritual contributions at various periods of history. One will be surprised to find how Christianity itself was influenced in its early history by the inflow of Hindu thought. In the eighth lecture, "The Meeting of Religions," the traditional hospitality of the Indian mind is shown in its historical outline, and it is also pointed out that the Hindu attitude is not the outcome of any scepticism or expediency but that it is traceable to faith in spiritual experience. The Hindu method of religious reform as distinct from

revolutionary methods of the west is clearly brought out and held up for emulation. The subtle way in which the Hindu spirit is pervading even Christianity and Islam is also pointed out.

In the ninth lecture bears the title "Order in Hinduism." The reader is given here an insight into the democratic nature of the Hindu social organisation and its spiritual foundations. The much maligned Caste System, which is pointed out as the root-cause of all India's ills, is shown in its true colours, and its spirit is referred to as worthy of adaptation by all nations.

It would have been a pleasure to give copious quotations from the work; but it is a very difficult task when the book is one of such uniform excellence; and the space at our command is too short for it. Undoubtedly this is one of those books which a lover of culture ought to possess, though he may have to find means to buy it by giving up any other of his comforts. Dr. Radhakrishnan does not approach the study of the various problems from a sectarian or patriotic standpoint, and therefore we are sure the Western reader will appreciate the work the more and give the ideas given in it a patient hearing and fair trial.

**Philosophy of the Self:** BY PROF. G. R. MALKANI. PUBLISHED FROM THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY, AMALNER. PAGES 218. PRICE 2-8-0.

Prof. G. R. Malkani is well known in the Indian philosophical world as a keen metaphysician who is deeply interested in Advaita in its theoretic and practical aspects. Though well versed in Indian and European thought, he prefers the rational method of the West and the spiritual conclusions of the East. To him philosophy is not a critical analysis of mere concepts, but it is the analysis of experience; it is a transcendental psychology interested in analysing the truth of the Self. True philosophy is the philosophy of the Self which is beyond the subject-object relation. No theory of knowledge can accept the reality of the object as it does not exist in its own right. It is not because a thing is real we know it, but because we know it it is real. And this knowledge is the knowledge of the 'I' beyond the ego. The Self is its own proof, and there is no prior ignorance of the self. It does not reveal anything; it is revelation itself; and this revelation is a pure intuition. There is really no mystery in life; for example, in mistaking rope for the snake there is no mystery but only a misunderstanding and this is removed by knowledge of the rope. The snake never was there; it was simply non-existent.

Prof. Malkani brings out the above truths of Advaita in a clear and convincing way. But his idea of God as an exalted man full of limitations may not appeal to the theologically minded, to whom a little credulity has more value than criticism.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### The Celebration in Paris

In spite of war conditions the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated in Paris with notable success. Many friends of the Vedanta Movement were out of Paris, and there was no public announcement; yet a very representative audience of over 120 participated in the function. The meeting convened for the purpose was presided over by a leader of the Paris University, Prof. Masson-Oursel—one held in high esteem by all Euro-

pean savants. He made a remarkable speech particularly apposite for the occasion. (We hope to publish it in one of our subsequent issues). The welcome speech given by Swami Siddheswarananda, the representative of the Ramakrishna Order at Paris, was also a very instructive one. The following is the text of that speech:—

It is with great joy and pleasure that we welcome you all to participate in today's gathering. We are met

here to celebrate the 105th birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. And I offer my thanks to our learned president, Prof. Masson-Oursel for so kindly agreeing to participate in the function. As I had the opportunity to remind you on a similar occasion, last year, I like again to express our gratitude to Monsieur Masson-Oursel, in more than one sense. He has come here in spite of his multifarious duties and responsibilities. And we welcome him here, not only as the academic representative of Indian culture in France but also as the hand that has contributed for the formation of our informal *Centre Vedantique Ramakrishna*. Under his aegis and direction, some four years back, the Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at the Sorbonne. It is only proper therefore that I express to you, Sir, the good wishes and thanks of all connected with our Movement in India and abroad, for having made it possible for us to meet here every week to study Vedanta and its practical bearing in life, based on the life experiences of our Master Sri Ramakrishna and the hoary orthodox Vedic Lore of India.

The life of Sri Ramakrishna is the living embodiment of all the spiritual aspirations of the Hindus from time immemorial. There has been in India a continuity of spiritual tradition from the dim prehistoric past down to our own times, from the epoch of Mahenjo-Daro down to the period of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. From the figure of the Yogis that have been unearthed from excavations that place the civilization of India in the fourth millennium B.C. down to the present day, when we meet a Ramana Maharishi, India has followed one unquenchable research to discover the final verity as a living mode of life; and it is this, I am sure, which Prof. Masson-Oursel had in mind when he wrote in a section contributed to the *Evolution de la Vie Humaine*, where he writes '....Remaining exactly the same up till the crisis in which she finds herself in our days, India hardly risks, as is the fear with Japan in face of analogous diffi-

culties "to loose her soul!" She even brings to us her soul in contribution for the humanity of tomorrow. If today there is an awakening in modern India, one can note in it the active presence of those elements of glory that made Indian civilization not a dead chapter in the annals of history, but a vital force in that field of human value which the future of civilization would consider as the essential of all progress. Humanity has need of 'lived ideals' rather than ideologies. Human aspirations require the proper orientation that assembles on a social plane the achievements of thought and action. The conquest of matter by mind, mind by Supermind, has been the record of all progress in all ages and climes. If up till now that achievement has been the privilege of a few evolved souls, it is only an augury what the future of humanity has in store 'for the good of all, for the happiness of the all' as the great Buddha once pronounced. It is in the nature of manifestation to give expression to variegated values, and as such we cannot hope to have a standardized society where everyone will have the same height and level in consciousness. For in the degree the human is evolving into the divine, Nature throws out from the subhuman the semi-human and the really human types. To expect the millennium where every unit in creation would have attained the full level of evolution is the very antipodes of the law of manifestation. Nevertheless, it is not impossible to expect this world of ours be peopled by a larger body of population to whom spiritual elevation will be the object of all human endeavour. If to touch the feet of the divine is to make one unconscious of the sufferings of those less fortunately placed, religion would have long lost all values for which it functions in society. The great appeal of Jesus is the cross, the symbol of His suffering for humanity at large. To me the appeal of Bhagavan Sri Krishna is when he announced to his disciple Arjuna, 'He who sees me everywhere and sees everything in me, to him

I vanish not, nor to me does he vanish' (*Gita*, VI:30). The glory of Buddha is his divine compassion—to see that the portals of Nirvana be opened to all—and his declaration that HE shall not enter that state unless and until the least amongst us is resolved into that beatitude. I need not tell you that the very popularity of Islam is its great democratic appeal. A spiritual effort is only compatible with the proper effort to bring the solace of the supreme revelation down to the strata of human relations.

Today in celebrating the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna, I shall content myself by placing before you an experience of the Master that made Ramakrishna, the silent mystic, into Ramakrishna, the great Guru—the human vehicle of dynamic spiritual forces, the compassionate heart that shared the sorrows of humanity. It is on this second plane the mighty surge of his spiritual achievements transformed itself into huge streams that not only inspired all aspiring souls to reach a better evolution, but also made itself so dynamic that it has concretized itself into so many organizations that actually bring succour to the needy and the poor in their hour of distress; that mighty wave has surpassed the humble beginnings in the Order of Ramakrishna and has now expressed itself in all branches of the national awakening of which the Swami Vivekananda is the pioneer. Viewed from this point of view, Ramakrishna is the soul of India reincarnate when the shock of conquest and the shame of subjection had for a time bedimmed 'the glory that was Ind'.

The experience of the Master which I shall narrate presently resolves the longstanding dispute between the Absolute and the Manifestation. As I have often remarked in our Sunday lectures, to us, in India, the Real includes all aspects of analysis and synthesis; and that synoptic whole is the content where religion and philosophy are welded into realizable Ideal. The manifested, the Jagat, we call Maya; but that word is the most misunderstood amongst all the Vedantic terms.

Taken out of its proper setting it is always labelled as illusion, and the philosophy of Illusionism does not leave any scope for human endeavour; And it is immediately baptized by Occidental scholars and thinkers as more pessimistic than pessimism itself. Maya is the relative aspect of that Advaitic Reality. Relativity is ignorance, is Avidya, only in so far as it makes us forget the Unique which is its other aspect, the Absolute. That higher viewpoint is so forcibly expressed by Sri Shankaracharya: "Because everything springs from the Self, is dissolved in It, and remains imbued with It during continuance, for it cannot be perceived apart from the Self. Therefore everything is the Self." (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, page 358, Mayavati Edition). Sri Krishna expresses the same thing in the religious language when he says '*Vasudevah Sarvamiti sa mahatma sudurlabha*'—It is hard to find the realized soul who sees the Lord everywhere'. But how can one know this basis in Self, of the Sarvam, the All, the manifested-manifold, the Maya, if one has not experienced *consciously* that other aspect which is the static, —the Contentless Consciousness of the Absolute, in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. That aspect of Reality as static is not the negation of consciousness. In fact it is the summation of all relative consciousness. We are so habituated to live on the dynamic plane—in the flux,—that we do not take into account that fundamental basis in pure Consciousness wherefrom proceeds experiences based on subject-object relationship, expressed normally in our daily experience as 'diminution of consciousness' or 'enlargement of consciousness'. An unconscious diminution as in deep sleep, coma, or death is not the value one gives to that basis Consciousness, the Prana, the Chinmaya, which one realizes only in the Nirvikalpa Samadhi. In that state of Samadhi one does not attain any diminution of consciousness, though there is resemblance to it, as the opposites in nature have a tendency to appear alike. So for want of proper

term we call it the Fourth state, or the Turiya, reached only in Samadhi of the Nirvikalpa variety, Samadhi where there is absolute absence of mentation. There, in that state, one touches the fund and centre of consciousness, as one touches the fund and centre of a tornado which is always a silent centre from where all the whirly and whirling forces proceed. In fact it is the Great Silence that intervenes between *two ideas*, between two Bhavas. The primary Bhava in every experience is the Ahambhava, that of egoism. And in the Savikalpa experience this Ahambhava unites itself with the Ishtabhava—the Consciousness of the Ideal—and in that Union there is virtual ecstasy, the supreme culmination of the Dwaita and Visishtadwaita realizations. To reach Adwaita one must go a step further; even the state of experience has to be transcended. Pure Knowledge transcends experience where one has to posit the experiencer and the experienced, and the instrument to experience. When even the pure ego is absorbed in that subject-objectless consciousness, one gets Jnana of that aspect of Reality which is in Contentless Consciousness. In our state of ignorance even when we are unconscious of it, it is the Presence of *That* that makes knowledge in the relative field possible, and realizing which alone one can understand the passage from Sri Shankara I have just quoted. Ramakrishna realized that state under the inspiration and direction of Totapuri. And the great experience by which he could unite himself with the world at large and remain as proper guide to it came with his experience of Bhavamukha.

But pardon me, before I mention this experience of the Master, I should like to place before you an interview I had with one of the leading thinkers of modern India, Dr. Brajendranath Seal, who was for a time the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mysore. Dr. Seal, whose book *The Positive Sciences of Ancient Hindus* is so well known in Europe and India amongst all scholars, was a close friend of Swami Vivekananda. They were ex-

treme rationalists in the sense that word was used in the 19th Century. The young Vivekananda, then known as Narendranath, was so active intellectually that not content with the philosophy of Herbert Spencer, at the age of 18 or 20, was audacious to send to the distinguished thinker a criticism of his works which was acknowledged with the remarks that the criticisms were just and will be included in a forthcoming edition of his works. I just mention it to tell you that the young men who approached Ramakrishna were not of the ordinary calibre but were those who had been saturated with Western thought of the times that had no sympathy for any spiritual experience of the type that Ramakrishna had. Suddenly seeing a violent change in the outlook of Narendranath, Dr. Seal thought that it was due to his contact with the sage of Dakshineswar; and he went and spent an entire day with Ramakrishna. He saw Ramakrishna in Samadhi, the body getting rigid, the eyes getting fixed, all motion of breath stopping; he felt it all bizarre. He, like our modern Leuba, put it all down as a form of nervous breakdown, a type of catalepsy. For our human mind always searches to know through the known and if the known has a background in preconceived ideas, our very proud prejudice will prevent us from getting at the truth.

Dr. Seal told me that he could not at all class Ramakrishna under any known category except that of being pathologic. In a late hour as he retraced his steps to Calcutta on foot, a distance of fifteen Km., the hour was dark, it was rainy, there was thunder and lightning, and nature was mysterious, and he told me: 'A thought came to me then, that perhaps I am wrong in judging so hastily the experiences of the strange man I have seen; perhaps right above the ordered known nature of the human mind, there may be another aspect deeper and more substantial than anything we know of—and we so hastily judge, rather misjudge'. Fifty years afterwards this great man in his old age

came lifted on a stretcher to participate in the Centenary of Ramakrishna and gave public expression to a homage due to one of the most illustrious personalities on whose spiritual experiences hundreds of organizations in modern India derive their inspiration in their service of suffering humanity. I place here this candid confession of an encyclopedic mind before you all, for if the state of Samadhi is pathologic as is so uncharitably thought of by some modern psychologists, then it were better that we all develop that malady.

After the experience of the Nirvikalpa Samadhi Ramakrishna realized the *integral reality* and placed his other experience before the world—the realisation of Bhavamukha. That word literally means 'at the threshold of Bhava', i.e., that state which gave him the Absolute and the Manifested in one organic vision. Here the distance between metaphysics and psychology gets closed. In the experience of Nirvikalpa the human *psyche* does not function; for, the Knower, the Knowledge and the Known, all get welded into a non-multiple unity. In the Bhava of the supreme religious experience, one is at-one-ment with Cosmic Consciousness. It is the very apotheosis of the maximum of enlargement of consciousness according to psychological achievement. But how can these two opposite experience meet and join hands. The answer to that riddle one finds in the unique experience of Bhavamukha which has hardly any or no parallel in the history of mysticism. That is the state known as *Dvaita-advaita-vivarjitam*, the state beyond Dvaita and Advaita as conceptual approaches to Reality. It is this realization that made Ramakrishna the Guru of his own Guru, Totapuri. Totapuri knew only the static aspect of Reality and considered every manifestation as unreal. But the manifestation from the basic consciousness springs as the Shakti or energy of Brahman. As Sri Sankara has remarked, The cow is cow when it lies down as well as when it moves about. Sankara humorously remarks that it

does not become a horse. It ever is the same Reality.

Ramakrishna expresses the same truth in his illustration of the serpent coiled up and the serpent in motion. From the standpoint of synoptic vision there is one Reality and we cannot posit anything about it in terms of human thought. As Sankara says, the function of all Upanishadic texts is to tell us that any possible specification of Brahman will land us in error. From our first approach we say that the flux is unreal; for we are caught up in it, and as *non-contradiction* is considered in our philosophy to be the test of truth, the fleeting modes cannot be considered as true. But when one rises to the Turiya and views all from the Self, there is nothing to be contradicted and nothing that contradicts; for everywhere one realizes the same homogeneous mass of Reality. And it is this which is indicated by the Bhavamukha experience of the Master.

Let me close this homage to the Master by quoting his saying that when we weigh a fruit we should take into account not only the seed but the pulp and the rind—the fruit in all its entirety. We have always the habit of taking only a truncated view of life. For our ego accompanies our intellectual pursuits and vitiates our understanding through the prejudices common to all. If in our philosophic discipline we can be relieved of our prejudices of the intellect, and if in our religious discipline we can be freed from the prejudices of emotion, the world will be a much happier ground for us all to live in.

I cannot better conclude this homage to the Master than by quoting a few lines of prayer from the Gitanjali of Rabindranath Tagore:

'In one salutation to thee, my Lord, let all my senses spread out and touch this world at Thy feet.

Like a rain-cloud of July hung low with its burden of unshed showers, let all my mind bend down at thy door in one salutation to Thee.

Let all my songs gather their divine strains into a single current and flow to a sea of silence in one salutation to Thee.

Like a flock of homosick cranes flying night and day back to their mountain nests, let all my life take its voyage to its eternal home; one salutation to Thee.'

#### A Report of the Sri Ramakrishna Gurukula Rural and Industrial Exhibition

*Suami Ajarānanda, the Secretary of the Exhibition writes:—*

"We have great pleasure to place before you the report of the first Rural and Industrial Exhibition we recently conducted on the 30th Makaram, 1st and 2nd Kumbhom at the Sri Ramakrishna Gurukul, Vilangans. As enunciated in our prospectus, our primary object in organizing an exhibition of this nature was to give the rural population a comprehensive idea of the need and possibilities of improving agriculture, cattle-breeding and the various cottage industries in our State and judging from the encouraging response evident in the quite representative collection of local agricultural exhibits that was on show, in the remarkably good number of babies exhibited at the Baby Show, and most important of all, in the surprising number of visitors which mounted over 5000, we have every reason to believe that the above objectives had been to a very great extent successfully achieved. This being the first of its kind in the locality and we being quite new to the field, we confess things had not been to our entire satisfaction. But with the little experience we have gathered at our back and with the support and co-operation we had been fortunate enough to elicit from His Highness's Government and from the public, we feel confident, we hope to attain better results in the coming years, when this can, in the fitness of things, be made an annual feature.

"The opening of the Exhibition was performed by Dr. A. R. Menon, the Hon'ble Minister for Rural Development, on the evening of the 30th Makaram, before a large gathering of the local population and the elite of Trichur. The Minister in his opening speech dwelt at

large on the humanitarian activities of the Ramakrishna Mission in general and applauded the efforts of the Gurukul in the field of rural reconstruction which had been crowned by the Exhibition that had been organized.

"The main items for the 2nd day was Baby Show and Public Health Cinema which were largely attended by the village folk. It is indeed remarkable that 79 babies were exhibited for the Baby Show. The judging of the babies was done by Dr. A. K. Menon, Civil Surgeon, Trichur, assisted by Dr. M. S. Menon. Babies were divided into three sections, as babies under 3 years, babies under 2 years and babies under 1 year, three prizes being given to each section. Milk and biscuits were distributed to all the babies assembled. It deserves special mention here that the attendance on the 2nd day alone went over 3000, of which Excursion parties from more than half a dozen schools of Trichur contributed a good portion. We may also remark in this connection that the urban student population have profited considerably by their visit to the rural Exhibition.

"The prizes for the Baby Show and for the other Exhibits were distributed on the following day along with the anniversary functions. Silver medals, Certificates, clothes, etc. were given away as prizes. Among the local agricultural exhibits, to mention some, an elephant-foot yam, a big jack-fruit, a phenomenal bunch of coconuts, a big bunch of arcanuts, were the most deserving. The three days' exhibition came to a close by the staging of the Drama, 'Keralaswaran' by the school students.

"Our sincere thanks are due to His Highness's Government for the uniform help and warm support extended to us and also for the participation we had of the Development Departments which made no mean contribution to the success of the exhibition. We are deeply grateful for the sympathy the Dewan has evinced on our behalf by consenting to be the patron of the Exhibition Committee. To the Hon'ble Minister, Dr. A. R. Menon, we are very much indebted for the guidance and personal assistance he had been gracious to render us as President of the Exhibition Committee and the help he had given us as Minister. We are deeply



sensitive of the sympathy and co-operation and personal service extended to us by the Heads of the Departments amongst whom the names of the Director of Agriculture, Director of Public Health, The Dewan Peishkar, the Registrar of the Co-operative Societies, Director of Industries and the Development Officer deserve special mention. We are also specially thankful to the Director of Public Instruction for the kind arrangements he made, by which the school population of the town and of the locality found it convenient to attend our functions. We record here our most sincere and heartfelt thanks and appreciation of the useful help and worthy guidance the Young Men's Association of Trichur has given us and especially of the able personal assistance of its Secretary, Mr. K. Sreedhara Menon. Lastly, we register our feelings of thankfulness to the kind gentlemen, who serving on the Committee or outside, did all sorts of signal services that went to make the Exhibition the success it deserved."

#### **The Ramakrishna Mission Society, Rangoon. The Report for the Years, 1938 and 1939.**

This society is one of the Centres of the Ramakrishna Mission started in 1901. During the four decades of its existence it has been able to expand its work enormously and to acquire a tenement and erect a spacious three-storied building. The activities of the Society disclosed by the Report for 1938 and 1939 fall under these six heads:—

(1) Maintenance of a Free Reading Room and Library, (2) a Free Tamil Ladies' Library, (3) a Free Guest House, (4) Conducting weekly Religious discourses and occasional lectures, (5) Celebrations of the Birthday Anniversaries of the great world Teachers, and (6) Occasional Relief work.

The Library now contains 6850 books and the Reading Room receives as many as 156 papers in English, Burmese and Indian Languages. The total number of readers who made use of the Reading Room was 29,381 in 1938, and 28,776 in 1939. At the end of 1939 the Library had 865 borrowers on its rolls and the total number of books issued in each year was about 12500. The Tamil Ladies' Library contains 1312 books.

The total number of borrowers was 208. The average number of books issued was 5000.

Regular classes and lectures on the Upanishads, the Gita, and other scriptures were held by the Swamis of the Mission. A fortnightly moral and religious instruction class was also conducted in the Insein Jail for the benefit of the B-class prisoners. Besides, the Society also celebrated the Birthdays of the various great Teachers including those of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The ladies celebrated the Birthday of Sri Saradamani Devi (the Holy Mother).

The finance of the Society is steadily improving as the activities are growing rapidly. The balance sheet indicates the immediate need of Rs. 5000 to clear the outstanding loan; and further funds for furniture and decoration of the building are required.

#### **The Ramakrishna Mission Asrama, Bankipore, Patna.**

##### **The Report for the Year, 1939.**

This Asrama was started in 1922. The following are the activities of the Asrama: (1) Scriptural classes and special lectures (2) Mass Education (3) Students' Home: In the year under report there were only two students. (4) Library: It contains 410 books and gets 9 periodicals and one daily paper. (5) Charitable Dispensaries: There are two dispensaries, one at the Asrama and the other at Mithapur. During the year, 21994 patients received treatment. On the 20th October last, the opening ceremony of the dispensary building was performed.

The annual birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were celebrated. On the occasion the poor-feeding was one of the main items. There were also a students' gathering and a ladies' gathering.

As it is often the case, the progress of the Asrama in the service of the poor is handicapped by insufficient finance. As the balance sheet shows the Asrama requires immediately Rs. 400, to repay the loan; further it is in need of contributions to buy a magic lantern, and for the addition of new buildings to the Adbhutananda Pathasala and to the dispensary.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOLUME XXVII



JUNE, 1940.

## THE MESSAGE OF THUNDER

INDIA has a fair share of the south-west monsoon commencing from the month of June, especially in the West Coast and the Indo-Gangetic plains. Day after day we have observed during this season clouds gathering on the horizon and swiftly transforming into fantastic shapes gathering huge mass and ascending the meridian to pour down in heavy showers their entire revivifying contents on languishing stretches of vegetation and sinking creatures that precariously subsist on the sun-baked soil of our planet. But before they confer upon the parched earth the luscious joy of abundant life, these divine messengers herald their advent by lashes of lightning and protracted rumbles that peal off into volleys of Da.. Da.. Da...

Numerous times this impressive phenomenon must have been watched by our wise ancestors of the Vedic times, and would not have missed the sublime moral lesson indicated therein, which they beautifully interpreted with the aid of their guileless, child-like, and alert, imagination.

To those children of uncontaminated Nature, air and land and water were not intriguing elements waiting for conquest, exploitation, and spoliation at the hands of ingenious man. The sky was the father and the earth the mother to them. And Prajapati, the Creator, who ruled and ordained all existences was the father and preceptor of all—gods, men, and demons or Asuras. These were in different stages of inner development and in their kindergarten of the universe He taught them with the help of objects, events, and situations, which may have sometimes seemed to them to be beautiful or baleful, sublime and telling lessons.

We get an inspiring instance of how Prajapati taught those alert forbears of the present humanity such lessons; how they read into the phenomena of Nature great ethical lessons that should be indelible on the minds of all, in the following allegoric anecdote given in the *Brihadaranyakopaniṣad*, Chapter V, section ii.

The threefold descendants of Prajapati, gods, men, and Asuras dwelt as Brahmacharins with their father. On the completion of their term the following conversation took place between Prajapati and them:

Gods: Please give us instruction.

Prajapati: 'Da'. Have you understood?

Gods: We quite follow you. You tell us: **CONTROL YOURSELVES**—Damyata.

Prajapati: Yes, you have grasped my meaning.

Men: Pray, instruct us.

Prajapati: 'Da'. Have you understood?

Men: We have. You tell us: **GIVE**—Datta.

Asuras: Please impart to us knowledge.

Prajapati: 'Da'. Have you understood?

Asuras: Yes we have. You tell us: **HAVE COMPASSION**—Dayadhvam.

Prajapati: Yes, you have understood.

That very thing is repeated by the heavenly voice, the cloud, as Da.. Da.. Da.. (the initial syllables of the three Imperative verbs, in Sanskrit—Damyata, Datta, Dayadhvam) meaning, Control yourselves, Give, and Have compassion. Therefore one should learn these three—self-control, charity, and compassion.

This great lesson taught by the heavenly father is even today thundered into the ears of man. What other meaning can this beautiful allegory have than the plain fact that gods and men and demons are all equally the children of one Creator who instructs them impartially, even uttering the same syllable but implying three different suitable instructions? They are not mere mythical

figures, but types of humanity which we come across in our lives. In commenting upon this section Sri Sankaracharya says:

*There are no gods or Asuras other than men. Those among men who are wanting in self-control, but otherwise endowed with many good qualities, are the gods; those who are particularly greedy are men, while those who are cruel and given to injuring others are Asuras. So the same species, men, according to their lack of self-control and the other two defects, as well as their tendencies of balance, activity, and inertia are given the title of gods, men, and demons. Hence it is men who should learn all the three instructions; for Prajapati means his advice for them alone; because men are observed to be wild, greedy, and cruel.*

From the Epics and the Puranas we know more about these three types. Gods are often depicted there as possessing a blank cheque to enjoy every possible and imaginable pleasure, because as a result of unremittent effort (Tapas) in previous states they have made themselves competent and have secured the power and means for that purpose. But as they are often enslaved by the desire to enjoy, they exhaust themselves by inordinate indulgence and revert to poor human status, even though they are gifted with better parts. Want of self-control is almost the only factor that prevents them from soaring to the highest pinnacle of freedom and glory. Do we not see every day around us individuals and nations endowed with enviable gifts such as command over vastly rich natural resources, supreme power

of intellect and will, and a hundred other coveted excellences, perish in a precipitous fall brought about by the sheer want of self-control? These Devas or glittering creatures are advised self-control, which when practised confers upon them all-round perfection.

Man is proverbially in want; that is why he propitiates gods and subjugates Nature. It is pinch of want, the galling sense of imperfection, privation, and unfulfilled desires that goad him to be a fiend or a god. Such are the representatives of the true human level of existence. The limitations and imperfections of man at the truly human level are many; but the central defect is that he is self-centred and extremely reluctant to give. On the other hand, add one virtue to god—self-control—he is right away on the portals of perfection. In order to rise, earthly man should become first invested with the position of a Deva by the exercise of charity, by giving in sacrifice. Therefore the Prajapati's mandate to him is that he should transcend his grabbing acquisitiveness and clinging to possessions by developing the attitude of serviceableness, self-giving, altruism, or charity.

We are told in the sixteenth chapter of the *Bhagavadgita* in very plain words that those born to the heritage of the Asuras or demons are hypocritical, arrogant, self-conceited, wrathful, rude, and perplexed. Impure, wicked, and untruthful as they are, they do not know either right activity or right rest. In their eyes the world has no moral

basis, and lust is the cause of all. Holding such views they commit cruel deeds, coming forth as the foes for the destruction of the world. Giving themselves up to insatiable desires, full of hypocrisy, pride, and conceit they act always with impure motives. Fastened by a hundred ropes of cravings and revelling in lust and anger, they strive to gain enormous wealth by unjust means for the gratifications of their passions. Their boast is: 'This foe I have slain and others too I will slay. I am the lord of all, and I enjoy myself. I am prosperous, mighty, and happy....who is there like me?' These cruel haters, vilest of men, hate the divine in themselves and in others. What Prajapati prescribed for this type who make the world a peaceless pen of wild beasts was a simple antidote: compassion. For it is evident that their multifariously ramified wickedness can be brought under the single head of cruelty.

Are we not today in greater need of Prajapati's instruction—the lesson which the thunder-clap dings into our ears again and again? Let the prosperous and the ingenious exercise more restraint, the grabbing and stingy more generosity, the cruel and diabolical greater compassion, and let one and all be endowed with more of self-control, charity, and love, individually—then his or her spiritual glory and universal peace is within sight. This is the prime instruction of Prajapati to all. This is the eternal message perpetually transmitted to us by the heavenly voice of thunder.

—EDITOR

## VISION OF THE BEYOND

**Mr. Edmond Holmes** is the author of several religious books as *The Creed of Christ*, *The Creed of Buddha*, and *The Headquarters of Reality*. He was a liberal-minded christian who welcomed light from beyond his creed. The following posthumous writing reveals how keenly he felt the inadequacy of some of the theological concepts of Christianity, especially at our present state of knowledge. We are extremely grateful to **Mrs. Holmes**, for making this writing available for publication.—Ed.

I was born in the middle of the last century. Since then there has been an immense expansion, in many directions, of the horizon of human achievement: an immense expansion of man's conception of the range of space and of time; an immense expansion of his knowledge and command of the forces and resources of the material world; an immense expansion of his conception of his own powers and possibilities; an immense expansion of his outlook on his own destiny, with its vision of worlds beyond this world and lives beyond this life; an immense expansion, in fine, of his conception of the meaning and purpose and value of existence.

In man's outlook on the material world and its space-time framework, and in his knowledge and command of its forces and resources, the expansion has, on the whole, been actual and not merely potential. Man has consciously accepted it, and believed in it, and lived up to it, and tried to make it his own. But in his outlook on his own powers and possibilities, on his own destiny, on the range of the inner life of the uni-

verse, the expansion has so far been potential rather than actual. It is waiting for man to accept it, and believe in it, and live up to it, and make it his own. Some men are doing this; and the number of these is increasing from day to day. But, for the average man, the familiar horizon of experience and belief still holds good; the normal is still identified by him with the real; and stories of supernormal happenings and supernormal planes of being are still received by him with incredulity, if not with open derision. This, indeed, is what we have every right to expect when we remember with what bewildering rapidity the vast and far-reaching changes of recent years have taken place.

Nor is the mind of man, in spite of its strongly conservative bias, standing still. For, all the while, the actual expansion which has taken place in man's outlook on the material world, and its space-time framework, and its forces and resources, is co-operating with his experiences of the supernormal to give actuality to those expansions in his outlook which are still largely potential, still waiting for him to bring them within the range of his conscious thought and into conduct of his life.

When I was a child we were officially taught, and we were content to believe, that the world in which we lived—'the earth and the heavens'—had been created, called into being out of nothing, by the fiat of an Omnipotent Will, in the year 4004 B.C.; that the work of the creation had been completed in a week of our time; and that on some future day the earth and the heavens

would be destroyed by fire and all the human inhabitants of earth, present and past, living and dead, would pass into, and dwell for ever in, either Heaven or Hell.

This teaching no longer contents us. The change in our reckoning of time from thousands of solar years to hundreds of millions of light years, is symptomatic of the radical changes in our outlook on the material world which have taken place in the past half century. And not of those changes only. The recession of our mental horizon, of which it has been both a cause and a symptom, has taken many forms. Do we still believe in the Heaven and the Hell of orthodox theology? Do we still believe that this one life on earth is our only period of probation, the only period in which self-transcendence through self-development is possible, the only period in which the seed can be sown as conduct which will be reaped as character, good or bad, and as well-being or ill-being? Do we still believe that this one life, be it short or long, is decisive of our destiny for all eternity; that, at the end of it, at the moment of death, each one of us finally closes his account with God?

These things are still officially taught; but the mind and the heart of man are turning away from them. The change in our reckoning of time and our measurement of space is finding its counterpart in changes in our outlook on our own inner being and on the inner constitution of the Universe. We are ceasing to think of this one life on earth as the only life in which the soul makes or mars itself. We are ceasing to think of this world of ours as the only stage on which the drama of human life is

enacted. A vision of life within life and world within world, of life beyond life and world beyond world, is beginning to awake in us in response to the secret demands of the soul for a stage which is worthy of its latent powers and possibilities. And we learn from the revelations of Spiritualism which is beginning to be insistent in its demand for recognition and attention, that this vision is no ideal dream, but a reflexion, faint as yet but growing ever stronger, of what is passing in the farflung realms of Reality,—from what is outermost to what is innermost, from the boundary-line which is ever receding to the centre which meets us at every turn.

For how long shall we be content to tell ourselves and to teach our children what we are ceasing to believe in our own heart of hearts? The time has surely come for the leaders of religious thought in Christendom, official and unofficial, to disown the teaching about the 'Beyond' which has so long strangled, or, at best, depressed and misdirected, the spiritual life and the spiritual energies of the professed followers of Christ. Better to retire into the silence of agnosticism than to teach with an air of authority an account of God's dealings with man which outrages our instinctive sense of justice and our faith in the Divine wisdom and love, which has no foundation in reason or experience, and which shrinks with horror and alarm from an appeal to either of those guarantors of truth. Better, I repeat, the silence of agnosticism than the blasphemous theology which places at the heart of the Universe a monster of injustice and cruelty,

and makes fear of Him the master-motive of one's life.

But better than the silence of agnosticism is the teaching which is the outcome of our ever expanding experiences of the Beyond, teaching which tells us in ever clearer accents that at the heart of the Universe is neither cruelty nor injustice, but a never-failing fountain of Love; of Love which gives itself freely, and renews itself eternally by the very lavishness of its giving; of Love which asks in return for nothing more than Love, and will be content with nothing less.

For there is, I think, a deeper meaning in the Christian doctrine of

the Divine Trinity in Unity than any which official theology, with a word-bound philosophy behind it, has found in it. May we not now say that, ultimately and ideally, *the Father* is God the All-Lover; *the Son* is Man, the Beloved Child—the Child who has not grown to the fullness of his stature till he can say “I and my Father are One”; that each of these is in turn loved and lover; and that *the Holy Spirit* is their mutual Love? And may we not add that the essence of Love is self-loss, with joy in the losing,—joy, because the greater the loss, the greater the gain?

EDMOND HOLMES

## THE CONCEPTION OF MAYA

In the following paragraphs **Swami Satavarupananda** sheds some rational light on Sri Sankara's conception of Maya, which at the present day is often misunderstood and maligned by superficial thinkers.—Ed.

THE only difference between Sankara and Ramanuja, so far as Avidya is concerned, is that while it is real to the latter, to the former it is unreal from the Absolute standpoint. So long as there remains the slightest trace of duality, Maya is true, call Ishvara-Shakti (God's power) or not; for all duality is but Maya's effects. But in the final salvation or in the true nature of Brahman there is no trace of Maya.

One question must be answered before Sankara is really vindicated. What is this puzzling Maya? To say it is neither existent nor non-existent does not make it clear. To

say it is the cause of this multiplicity does not improve the situation; for it depends on this very multiplicity for its existence. The truth is, it is a mere ‘statement of facts’. Call it explanation or principle or otherwise, call it cause or effect, call it existent or non-existent, it does not matter. It states our experiences; it *is* experience—experience of the ordinary plane. We see this wonderful variety of the universe, this sentient and insentient creation, these wonderful minds and their actions and re-actions, these production and dissolution of things and beings; and we say they are.

Our mind experiences many things within itself and many things which it feels to be outside itself and derived through senses. It feels within itself a bipartite division which it names the subject and the object, the seer and the seen, the observer and the

observed. Its experiences in the waking state, the dream state, and the state of deep dreamless sleep are similar in certain aspects and differ in others, sometimes agreeing with, and sometimes falsifying, one another. But in the midst of all these bewildering complexities of this incessant flux, it witnesses and feels something which is, or appears to be, at least to all intents and purposes, permanent—amidst the ever-changing objects it sees the subject permanent, amidst all limitations it feels something which eludes comprehension. The more it goes to think over it, the more does it recede. It sees that the subject and the object are correlated but when it goes to think how, it gets puzzled.

Senses present to the mind phenomena whose existences cannot be questioned; but reason asks why and how, and it gets no satisfactory answer, its doubts are not solved. Ordinary minds see the shifting scenes of nature, the actions and reactions of its complex forces, and enjoy or are overwhelmed with beauty or ugliness, terror or sublimity, joy or sorrow; but enquiring minds stop and ask how all these happen and why, go a few steps forward and then are involved in more doubts and contradictions, are confounded with a medley of truths and half-truths and falsehoods, of realities and appearances, are mystified, stupefied.

Those minds which are bold enough not to give up the enterprise, concentrate their energies and transcend the mystery and reach a state where with the cessation of the bipartite division of the mind into subject and object cease all complexities. This tremendous multiplicity of thoughts, feelings, and activities is lost in a

homogeneous Ease or Peace, which gives such an indelible stamp of conviction of its own certitude that even when those minds return or come down to the plane of ordinary consciousness, they cannot take the testimonies of the senses in the same fond way as they used to do before they entered the new region of consciousness or superconsciousness. These minds coming down from that state think and feel, see and hear, enjoy and suffer, in much the same way as before; but all the while the conviction of their false nature, of their evanescence, of their shadowy character, is there with such a force that they with all their actions and reactions do not count them at all. They see and do not see, feel and do not feel, enjoy and do not enjoy, suffer and do not suffer.

Now these two different sets of truths Sankara calls by the names of Paramarthika Satya and Vyavaharika Satya, the Supreme Truth and the pragmatic truth. And the whole experience of the Vyavaharika plane is called Maya or Avidya, or Maya's fabrication. Call it Maya or Maya's Karya (effect) it does not matter—it is all the same, just as hypnotism and things produced and felt under its spell are the same. But when it is spoken of in that vein, it should be understood that the speaker views it from the Paramarthika standpoint. When it is said that 'the world is false' it does not mean that it is pragmatically or practically so—that would be sheer madness. What it means is that in relation to that metaphysical truth, the truth that abides in all planes of consciousness, it is as good as false; to persons who have reached that



state, this world is a world of shows, it has no meaning.

So Maya or Avidya means the sum total of our experiences of the relative level, and Sankara includes in this all the mystic experiences that have traces of duality in them, reserving the term Paramarthika to mean the experience of the complete homogeneous unity. One is at liberty to narrow or widen the scope of the two terms according to one's reason or sentiment; Sankara would not quarrel over that. He is content with showing the two different kinds of experiences, one having both unity and diversity and the other having only unity and no diversity.

There is again Sankara's distinction between Savisesha Brahman and Nirvisesha Brahman—Brahman with attributes and without it, Mayopadhika or Mayasaktika Brahman and Mayatita Brahman. He does not ignore that Brahman is both Savisesha and Nirvisesha, both Saguna and Nirguna; in fact every reader of his commentaries must have marked in many places that he uses the terms Parameshvara and Brahman synonymously. But he emphasizes that the experience of the Suddha Brahman is the highest and truest experience, which once attained is not contradicted again, that this experience is that Brahman and that the experiencer becomes that Brahman as he always was, though he did

not know it before, so that all becomings in this last experience come out to be but apparent ones, that in reality there is only One Being and no becoming, that the Perfect needs no more perfection, that the Pure Consciousness cannot sport. He has quoted a number of Shrutis and we have shown Sutras which support his conclusions and in the interpretations of which no charge of text-torturing can be made against him.

What we have said, we think, is quite sufficient for our purpose. Still we are fully conscious of the fact that it will not shake the conviction of those who think differently. Not that they or we dogmatize, but that we all read and interpret books with our own minds which differ widely. We cannot go out of ourselves. Our minds are so constituted that they are bound to differ from one another in certain respects as they agree in certain others. Minds create unity in diversity and diversity in unity. We cannot blame any commentator, ancient or modern for holding different opinions or for reading different meanings in the same words or phrases. Everyone of us, so long as we are in the domain of the mind or Maya, is liable to the same fault. And the pity of it is that we cannot cease wrangling; for, that again is the way to the Truth.

SWAMI SATSVARUPANANDA

## 1 / MYSTICISM OF THE TANTRAS

**Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar, M.A., Ph.D.** is the author of *Comparative Studies in the Vedanta, System of Vedantic Thought and Culture, Mysticism in the Bhagavadgita, Hindu Mysticism According to the Upanishads, Eastern Lights* and other thoughtful works. A few years ago he visited the important centres of learning in Europe on invitation to interpret the cultural ideals of India. The following is the **Introduction** to a series of articles he has promised to contribute to *The Vedanta Kcsari* on 'Mysticism of the Tantras'.—Ed.

THE Tantras represent the collective wisdom of ages which unearths the composite nature of man and the forces functioning therein. They realize the ultimate truth of Transcendence and the liberation of human mind from its restricted being and movement. The aspiration is manifestly evident of a freedom from limited ways, of hope of an assimilation of the cosmic consciousness and acquaintance with the laws of its movement. The Tantras do not ignore the dynamic side of our existence; to ignore it is to leave the play to ignorance. To this position the Tantric inspiration is not committed. Naturally, the Tantras present a form of spiritual inspiration and a cast of thought which have their uniqueness. This uniqueness consists in their presenting the reality and the value of the dynamic aspect of existence which they called 'Sakti'. The Tantras retain the old stress upon Transcendence of Being. but with this they add the eternal becoming as immanent in reality. The process is real, though in a cer-

tain sense and at a certain stage it is transcended in the Absolute. But nowhere in the reality of being, becoming is denied, for it forms an integral part of it. The Tantras are not limited to conceptual thinking and has not raised up a scaffolding of thought; their approach is through experience in all its grades, from the movement of the forces in the inanimate world, in the amoeba, up to the cosmical and super-cosmical ranges. The attraction of the Tantras lies in this that they have not indulged in the dialectics; by psychic intuition they discover the different layers of the existence, individual and cosmic, and the forces active therein. Their importance in Indian thought lies in tracing out the fountain source of creative power and its formations in the different planes of existence. Truth is envisaged not through the forms of thought but through the ever growing cosmic experience.

The Tantras do not go to the extreme of making the process a reality. The dynamic ingress or egress has a reference to a transcendent consciousness and being. That is the fixed point in our existence and consciousness which nothing can hide, none can deny. They make allegiance to the supreme Being and transcendent intuition as the ultimate fact not only of metaphysical but of spiritual significance. It is accepted as the primary datum and foundation of all existence and also as the supreme Puissance and Felicity in our spiritual experience. But the over-stress upon this fact and experience ignores the reality of becoming and the experiences revealed this

way. The Tantras measure them not in a detached way but in the setting of the integral existence. There is no meaning in denying that which is so clearly evident, and which fills existence with its endless richness. There is a process of endless consciring. This consciring is not restricted to energy, life, mind, or spirit—it goes beyond them and it is difficult to determine its nature by mental concepts.

They follow the supreme revelation of the Word, of the ordering scheme immanent in its creative effort. No philosophy can be better than this, for it emerges out from intuitive realization verified at each stage of expression by clear experience. It, therefore, does not suffer the uncertainties of intellectual efforts. Metaphysics is intellectual skill to map out the whole existence, but it invariably suffers limitation; for in the very process of measuring the depths of existence, it builds up a scheme of thought and speculative scaffolding. It cannot enter into the heart of things and envisage their nature and essence. True metaphysics originates out of knowledge by identity, which is other than what is pursued in metaphysics, *viz.*, reflection. The art of system-making is the sure process of intellectual satisfaction, but its shortness becomes evident with new achievements in the widening of experience. The human intellect requires infinite patience in its search after the eternal, for as experience grows deep, facts, intensely interesting and supremely delicate, make their appearance and transfer the focus of interest from the ordinary self-conscious seeking to the super-conscious revelation. And led by this urge the Tantras follow a path

which opens the vistas of wider life and finer consciousness. Naturally here the envisagement of truth follows from the art of life; for art is the process and the method of unfoldment. The modulations of being can be so regulated that the richer conscious life can be activated in us revealing supramental truths. Such revelations presuppose the plasticity of being, for truths are perceived directly and not discovered by thinking. Truth is immanent in life, and when life is finely attuned and nobly modulated, Truth is revealed. Life is harmony; its wider reaches and intensive depths can bring truth within easy access. The Tantras follow naturally not the speculative method, but the immanent urge of being to grow in its wake. To be conscious fully and intensely is to approach truth intimately. It is unlike speculative thinking. It is acquaintance with the immanent spirit-force and consciousness which is at the root of all cosmic striving and impulse. The Tantras discover this *divine consciring* and pursues it, for it is not only the creative, constructive, and additive force, but also the source of knowledge. It is what redeems us from the labyrinth of experiences and invests us with cosmic feelings. This method has its advantage. At every stage of the widening consciousness, intimate and direct acquaintance with awareness freed from its subterfuges and limitations exhibits it in its integrity. Our conscious life is so complex that it is not impossible to draw our inspiration from one of its dominant notes and expressions and to build a construction upon it. Such a partial revelation leads not unoften to imperfect construction and imperfect

expression. Such has been the case when the analytical intellect has built a philosophy. The integral functioning of consciousness has not been sympathetically understood. Inherent contradictions in our integral nature have been emphasised. Such must be the inevitable result of our truth-seeking when the knowledge by identity is displaced by the ratio-cinative thinking. Tantrik mysticism does not envisage Truth or Reality by cutting itself adrift from life, but by insisting upon life both in creative emergence and self-withdrawing process. In this process it can see the whole movement of life which gives better knowledge than understanding.

The Tantras by psychological analysis probe deeper. Its methods are more psychological than logical. It is super-logical. The psychological penetration exhibits the nature of ultimate becoming enfolded in Being. The Tantras do not dogmatize in any way; for its method is experience, and whatever conclusions they advance, they are based upon pure spiritual and psychological experience. It is really interesting to note how the Tantrik mysticism passes through fine aesthetic, psychic resonance, finally grasping the truth of both impersonal becoming and being. It realizes transcendental and dynamical Being with its twofold infinitude, (1) an unfettered expansion

and (2) a continuous becoming. The Tantras take regard of the composing forces in man, psychical, vital, mental, spiritual; and through a rare insight see their formations and functioning in life's setting. A theoretical philosophy is a natural sequence, for knowledge must be fruition of psychological unfolding; but theoretical philosophy is not the aim, for its value is not great in comparison with the direct experience achieved in the different layers of our being. The Tantras supply us with a rare richness of experiences giving us the rare wisdom of the whole span of life in its graded expression and phases of its being in any stage of its expression. This way they inspire us by offering the occult knowledge of the mysterious forces which are activated in us and exhibit the way to the still finer evolution of man in knowledge and spirituality. The attraction of the Tantras lies here. This has been the secret of the Tantrik inspiration and its strength. Philosophy or Religion as intellectual illumination or spiritual aspiration does not carry us far to make our concrete life beautiful and its evolution hastened, unless the science to regulate the forces composing us is completely mastered to help our spiritual re-making.

MAHENDRA NATH SIRCAR

## TRUE RENUNCIATION IS REAL FULFILMENT

Just before the attack of Norway by the enemies **Swami Yatiswarananda** sailed to U.S.A., and is at present in New York, after a stay of over half a dozen years in the various countries of Europe spreading the truths of Vedanta. These notes are from a class-talk given to spiritual aspirants about six years ago in Germany.—Ed.

### I

Your prayer should never be aimless like balls just thrown into the air without hitting any mark. You must have a definite goal and direct your prayer to that. If you shoot with blank cartridges and your whole shooting is, at the same time, aimless, nothing will come of it. We may pray or pretend to pray, but in most cases the Lord can ask us, To whom have you prayed? Certainly not to Me.

With a calm and steady mind just aim at the target and hit it.

### II

Sometimes we get in our heart a little fire of renunciation; but then we again pour the waters of the world on it, until this fire becomes extinguished. The love for the world and everything that the world holds dear extinguishes the little love for the Divine we have. This fire of renunciation and dispassion must be constantly increased as there is every chance of its being extinguished by bad physical and mental associations and all the outgoing tendencies of our impure mind. In the beginning, dispassion is a very tender plant which must be hedged round and protected from all strong gusts of

wind and frost; otherwise it can never grow into a sturdy tree which no storm can shake. We must always be careful not to put wet wood on it instead of oil or clarified butter. To the extent we become freer from all personal relations and reactions and attachments we make a greater fire and thus become freer from the world.

In spiritual life renunciation and dispassion are the two most important factors without which nothing can be achieved. Divine Love fulfils everything; so really speaking there is no giving up, but fulfilment. Real love for God finds its expression in love for man without loving anybody as such. If we develop this new outlook our life changes altogether, because this new outlook breaks down all the barriers and snaps all bonds. It is the tendency of work always to bind and fetter the soul in every way; but if we offer all the fruits of our work to the Lord alone, this very work breaks down all the barriers, destroys all bondage; because then we become only instruments in His hands and know ourselves not to be the agents. We must find room for the Divine in the monastery, in the world, and above all, in our heart.

### III

Usually we find our mind is burdened with desires and passions, and to the extent we are able to rid ourselves of this load we feel more and more light-headed in the higher sense. We should try to shift our centre of consciousness from ourselves to God, and then we find we and everyone have a place in God.

## IV

You must never permit yourselves to be indefinite or vague. Everything must be clear-cut. You must pass through all the different stages being fully conscious of everything.

Very often we choose the wrong path owing to our false conceptions of life, and ultimately come to grief.

## V

Meat-eating, as such, is not so bad as its effects on others. We dehumanize a certain class of people because we wish to eat meat. The butchers are not at fault, but we. The deceivers are not at fault, but we who allow ourselves to be deceived by them. And we have to reap the consequences of dehumanizing others for our sake.

## VI

There is an adage that says, 'Like Guru, like disciple.'

## VII

You should read the story of the pigeons in Sri Krishna and Uddhava. It is so very instructive. We should profit by the experience of others. It is not necessary for us to pass through the same experience. It is not necessary for us to put our hand in the fire to know that it burns. But we do it and then, as soon as the pain is over, we put the hand again in the fire.

## VIII

Swami Brahmananda used to teach us, 'At the time of meditation you must think that desires and passions have no existence, that they are unreal. Gradually this impression will sink into your mind.'

It is necessary for us to build up a new thought-life, a new world of thought and a new and better way of looking at things. This can be

brought about only by conscious effort, by banishing all bad thoughts and bringing in new ones.

If you meditate on some form, you should do so thinking it to be bright and instinct with life. If you meditate intensely on some holy form, you become holier. If you meditate on some pure form, you become purer. Buddha says in one of his beautiful instructions, 'Look upon the world as a bubble. Whatever is subject to the law of origination, is subject to the law of dissolution.'

The sage seeks the Divine when he wants to have perfect security, when he wants to have something that knows no change. And in Him all this world-play takes place, but He ever remains the same eternally.

There is the sky, and there are clouds, but however much clouds may pass over the sky—the sky, as such, remains unchanged, ever the same, and never becomes identified with or diversified into the clouds.

## IX

The only ultimate proof for everything is direct perception. If there be a God at all, He must be seen. He must be felt. Mere theorizing will never do. We have to believe in the words of those who have seen Him; we have to follow their footsteps and then verify their experience. Mere faith won't do, although faith is necessary in the beginning. And, as Swami Vivekananda used to say, if anybody tells you, 'I have seen God, but you cannot do so', never believe such a person. All can see Him, although it may take years and years till we get the vision of God.

## X

'O Lord, when will Thy name cause streams of tears to flow from

my eyes, and my voice to be choked with emotion and my hair to stand on end!'

### XI

'One moment to me is like an age; my eyes are flooded with tears; the whole world is a void to me,—all this because of the separation from Thee.'

### XII

'The Atman is one. It is absolutely motionless, yet swifter than the mind in Its movements. It transcends all and hence the senses cannot reach It. It is perfectly steady and still. It outstrips all that run. In It does the vital energy sustain all the activity of living beings. It is ever moving and yet immutable. It is far and It is at the same time near. It dwells within all and yet It exists also outside everything. The wise one who perceives all objects as existing in the Atman, his own Self, and the Atman in every being, does not hate anyone for this reason. When to the seer all things appear as nothing but the Atman, then what delusion, what sorrow can come to the sage who beholds that Oneness?'

### XIII

'The Self is all-pervading, self-resplendent, formless, scatheless, muscleless, pure, unaffected by ignorance. He is the Great Knower, Omniscient, Transcendent and Uncreated.'

### XIV

'It is He Who has allotted their respective functions to the powers that govern the universe.'

### XV

'Under the cover of a golden brilliance the face of Truth lies hidden. Do Thou, O Protector, remove this

cover so that I who am devoted to Truth may realize It.'

### XVI

We must rouse a tremendous Divine discontent, the discontent which the mystics of all ages speak of. This is what Swami Brahmananda means. Unless we are able to rouse in the soul this Divine discontent that drives us towards God, spiritual life cannot begin. This discontent destroys all our attachments to worldly things and all our desires.

### XVII

Peace with the world is no real peace. There can never be any real peace with the world. There must never be a kind of slackness in our striving, nor any kind of satisfaction with things as they are. Such forms of satisfaction are very, very dangerous for all spiritual aspirations. There must be tremendous discontent and tremendous restlessness for not having advanced sufficiently in our moral and spiritual life. We must consciously keep up the fire of restlessness and discontent for the Higher Life. We must never waste our energies for anything lower. We must never prefer the peace of lethargy to this higher restlessness.

There can be no security unless we have already proceeded very far towards the ultimate goal. Any devotee may come to grief or have a nasty fall at any moment before he has attained to self-realization. So we should never risk too much relying on our own strength before having advanced considerably.

### XVIII

Spiritual practice and prayer are needed. Constant prayer, day and night, constant meditation, constant thinking of higher thoughts, if we can

do so. The mind of the beginner must be kept constantly busy with the Divine idea so as to create the habit. After having created the right habit, the path becomes smoother, and there is less strain in the life of the aspirant.

Never allow any break in your practices and daily routine. This is very bad and should be avoided by all. Try to develop great doggedness and unshakeable determination. Then everything will become easy and pleasant in the end.

#### XIX

'O Thou, King of kings, pray bless me with a vision of Thee. I beg of Thee Thy grace. Do Thou cast Thy merciful glance on me. I am offering to Thee this soul of mine, scorched in the burning flames of the world. My heart is covered with dirt and stains. The spell of ignorance has made me almost dead. Do Thou O Lord, purify and revive me with the shower of Thy vivifying grace.'

#### XX

'O Thou, O Lord of the miserable, please pour the nectar of Thy Love into my soul. Then alone will my burning heart be soothed, and none can prevent this. At the touch of waters of Thy Love the dry plant again blossoms forth, and springs bubble up in the desert and in the sandy places. Having come to hear of Thee, Redeeming Stream, of Thy Immortal Love, I crave for a drop of it for my heart scorched by sorrow. Being blessed with Thy Love, O Thou Greatest Friend, may I go out of the darkness of the world, rid myself of the miseries of life and thus find comfort for my troubled soul.'

#### XXI

Slowly, steadily, but with great perseverance and energy, train the

body. Train the mind relentlessly. Make them both fit. This 'slowly and steadily' does not mean that we should be careless. We should do no violence to either body or mind, but we should never become slack.

As it is a new life, a new course, therefore the rule for all is:— Strengthen your nerves. Spiritual life, in the beginning, always brings tremendous tension and tremendous reactions. So the nerves must be made strong to bear it and tension must be minimised. The mind must be calmed and, at times, relaxed.

#### XXII

Food is not the most important thing; I mean, physical food or nourishment. So Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'Meat or no meat, fish or no fish, the mind should be kept pure.' The best instruction is to avoid all those who are not necessary for your spiritual life, and to do away with all those things which are not needed for it. The food must be pure: the food of the eyes, the ears, of all the senses. Physical food alone is not enough. This is very important, as I have said many a time.

#### XXIII

It is always necessary for the aspirant not to keep the nerves highly strung.

There is a little piece of poetry by Edward Markham which is very nice. He says:—

"For all thy days prepare  
And meet them ever alike;  
If you're the anvil, bear,  
If you're the hammer, strike."

This little piece Miss MacLeod used to like very much. So she sent it to me one day.



## MUSINGS ABOUT MYSTICISM

THE main trouble of convincing an ordinary man of the truths of mysticism is his obstinate habit of thinking that he is a being independent of the rest of the world. When A suffers from tooth-ache B does not feel it. What A thinks B is sure, he can never know. Each seems to have an existence far and away, the most individual, independent, and separate from others, physically and mentally. Indeed B may pity A's tooth-ache and successfully guess A's thoughts also. That is, he may imaginatively effect a sympathetic identification of his own personality with A's and suffer and think with him. Yet the reality of personal experience seems so different from such imaginative vibrations to other men's experiences that we refuse to think there can be any truth in the identity of two personalities. Merely because a tree shakes when the wind blows it does not mean that the tree and the wind are one.

Now this conviction of the separateness of individual selves from each other and from the environment, of the subjective from the objective, is the prime cause of our inability to understand (and much more to realize) mystical truths. The essence of mysticism is that All creation is One in the sense in which each of us feels he is one. A and B are not different. In fact their identity is so complete that it would be wrong even to compare them to two limbs of a living organism. In the mystical sense they are not even as far away from us as our hands and feet. In terms of the Ultimate Reality when A has tooth-ache the pain of it must reach the outermost confines of the

Universe. And when B exults over his unique fortune at the Irish Grand National the stars themselves literally join in the jubilation. No man need have cause to think that he suffers or rejoices alone; hates or loves alone. It would be truer to say that the entire Cosmos suffers, rejoices, hates, loves, dies, and is born through us.

Perhaps these truths might gain in clarity if we regard every human being (for the present we shall leave out of account all that is not human) as a wireless station with definite and distinct individual characteristics of shape, make, and quality. When Mr. Talyarkhan faces the transmitting wireless apparatus and speaks out his impressions of the Quadrangular cricket field every wireless set which is 'tuned in' speaks. Some of them will only rumble and gurgle. They will deform the original speech out of shape and sense. And the listeners who know Mr. Talyarkhan will swear that what they hear has as little to do with Mr. Talyarkhan as a threatening earthquake or a cloudy day. Of course when outsiders (who are supposed to know better than those actually engaged in the game) are confounded like this, how can the poor apparatus itself be expected to know better? It will be as difficult for it to say whence the sound comes as it would be for us to say whence Life comes or how Thought comes. We have never been witnesses of the process or the Agent who is responsible for our Life and Thought. We think about both in mere inferences more than nine-tenths of which are generally wrong. Hence has arisen the pitiable belief (en-

forced by a ruthless universal thought-habit) that each individual is an independent entity distinct from other selves even as a living wireless set might think in respect of its fellows.

Death, perhaps, will make the matter clear to us. Relying on bare self-analysis we can only feel that each of us is a tiny bit of consciousness separated on all sides by measureless distances from the Beyond. Vague impulses from the Other Side now and then reach us and vanish before we can seriously

attend to them. Ages of reinforced habit have made us oblivious to all but our immediate necessities: food, pleasure, and comforts. The struggle for existence is keen. And we have neither time nor patience to think of our Great Home from which we have strayed into this world of strange happenings. It must have been long since we left our Home. For have not many of us forgotten its very existence?

C. S. BAGI

(Lecturer in English, Lingraj College, Belgaum.)

## WHO BRINGS RELIGION INTO DISREPUTE ?

—Not atheists who hate self-deception, but the so-called 'faithful' who do not carry out their loud professions into tangible practice, contends rightly **Dr. D. M. Datta, M.A., Ph.D.**, the author of the well-known *Six Ways of Knowing*.

Some people accept God as an impersonal Principle Who, in spite of His being the ground and common cause of all that exists, is not affected or tainted by anything subjected to the law of becoming or Karma. Individuals and nations see their rise and destruction by the inexorable law of Karma, reaping what has been sown. God gives what one merits, seeing the heart of the suppliants and their whole past, and not hearing the words of their petitions. Evils of life are explained by the deeds of man. Human standards of good and evil, according to them, are poor scales to appraise God. Others accept God as the acme of all worth and moral values, and consider Him as the true, just, and merciful Father and Master of all. Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of all creatures form

their first article of faith. Indeed this is a very practical and elevating conception which will bring peace and blessedness on earth. But it becomes a travesty when one claims this pride of place for one's religion, presses its universal acceptance on that ground, and at the same time, invokes the blessings of the Father to destroy some of one's brethren, however recalcitrant they might be. Thoughtful men can see this practical contradiction easily. In fact, some of the organized churches of unparalleled prowess have won large following and blind obedience, which have been often used for quite worldly purposes, by such sublime claims, and have failed miserably in carrying out the implications of such exalted tenets into practice when some crisis brought their worldly interests into clash with those exalted professions.—Ed.

THERE appeared some time ago in a newspaper the picture of a priest blessing a newly made torpedo. To people who are engaged in grim struggle for existence this is nothing

unusual or unbecoming. They have little time to think calmly of the significance of this act. But to an outsider who has opportunity to watch the phenomenon from a harmless distance it affords enough food for contemplation. What must be the idea of God in the mind of a Christian priest who can invoke the blessing of God on a man-killing-machine like a torpedo? What must be his idea of the relation of God to men, and the relation of men to men?

The replies that naturally come to his mind, if it is free from bias, are like these: The idea of God underlying such an attitude must be that of a national god, a god that cares only for the well-being of the worshipper's nation, and does not mind destroying the enemies. Either, then, there are as many gods as nations—a return to polytheism—or there is one God, but He has chosen one side.

Such ideas of God are not unknown to the world. The polytheism of tribal gods that can be moved by prayer to help a tribe to conquer its enemies has been found in many lands. It is one of the earlier stages through which the religion of men has gradually evolved. The monotheism of an indulgent god choosing some people as his favourites was also a stage in the development of religious consciousness. But are we to believe that Christianity with all its lofty idealism of the fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of all men has not advanced really beyond those primitive stages even in countries so proud of their faith as to send out missionaries to all corners of the world to replace all other faiths by theirs? This doubt becomes irresistible when one sees the picture

of a high rank church dignitary blessing a torpedo.

It may be thought unfair to judge a nation's faith by the deeds during abnormal times like wars. But in point of fact, as the psychologist will tell us, we know more about the inner makings of an individual, and so also of a nation, when a crisis blows off the mask. The depth of religious conviction can be judged best when it is put to such a test as we note in the present. The gospels of love and fraternity are fruitless if they do not stand the stress of a crisis. They are nothing if they do not help men to resist the evil forces that tempt them during a war that threatens most the fraternity of men, and therefore, the fatherhood of God.

But it may be asked: 'What should then be the attitude of a truly religious man when his country or nation is at war? Should he not pray to God for its victory, and specially if he feels that its cause is a just one?'

It is a very pertinent question, and one who really believes in God cannot avoid it. For he must understand his duty in every sphere of life in the light of his relation to God. If religion is not to be confined to the cloister, a religious man may not sleep over a country's struggle for existence: he should be able to understand the meaning of such a struggle and his duty in it, not as a worldly man, but in the wider context of the universe as the creation of God and human beings as fellow creatures, if he really possesses such a faith. What would, then, be his attitude?

Such a person would scarcely take an aggressive part in a war. He may be required, however, to defend himself and his country against the

enemy who does not remember, or does not believe in, the fraternity of men, and attacks his legitimate rights. He would behave towards his enemy as a brother gone astray. Some non-violent form of defence would, therefore, be the thing most consistent with his creed. The true follower of Christ would be guided by the behaviour of the master towards his ruthless persecutors. His prayer cannot be to invoke the wrath of God on the enemy. It would be in tune with the martyr's prayer, 'Forgive them father, for they know not what they do.' He would confidently believe that the apparent loss to himself or his country as the result of his love and non-violence towards his enemy would bring about more lasting victory and peace to the world. Rather than try to destroy the enemy, he would try to reform him by the sheer force and sincerity of his love for him.

It all sounds like frothy idealism, and has the ring of an unpractical Utopia. But is there any doubt that this alone is the logical sequence of a religion which seriously believes in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men? One may or may not accept such religion. One may hold one of many other possible alternative conceptions of God and men. But if one accepts this, and moreover assumes the tremendous responsibility of being the priest of the faith, he may not disown by his acts the logical consequence of such a choice.

An exacting ideal no doubt! But such is the real meaning of religion. It is not often realized that religion entails so much of sacrifice of opinions, desires, and vested interests. Religion then becomes a matter of

profession and protestation. Those who realize the difficulties of religion, followed in practice, and turn non-believers or atheists are more honest and praise-worthy. They do not deceive themselves or others. But those who profess a faith, and exhort others to follow it, but do not take it seriously, do positive disservice to the cause of Religion. This is one of the causes why religion has failed again and again to unite different peoples and nations. A religion that is made subservient to political and economic ambitions, a church that is used for ensuring, or jubilating over, the destruction of other people, deserve to be treated with suspicion and contempt. It is no wonder, therefore, instead of worshipping God that is made the slave of worldly affairs, many self-respecting and thoughtful people have begun to worship the World—wealth, State, and society—the master of God enslaved. God and religion must either be restored to the place of supremacy, and placed above politics, or there would be no God. It is idle to complain, otherwise, that socialism or communism has ousted God and Religion.

The thing to realize in this connection is the place of God in the life of an individual and a nation. If we really believe in God as the Supreme Ideal or Being, our wishes and resolutions should conform to the Ideal. We should remember, before we resolve on any course of action, whether we are consistent with the Ideal. But in point of fact we, first make a wish, and then ask God to grant it; we make the machine and then invoke God's blessings; we declare war and form projects and pray for success.

We scarcely realize that we turn God into a mere slave of our wishes: or to put it more bluntly cease to believe in God, and only worship our wishes. One may practise self-deception of this kind and pass still as a theist. That is the irony! Religion is in danger, then, not so

much because of atheists who hate self-deception, but because of its adherents who are worshipping *themselves* in the name of God. The danger is all the greater when such self-deception is practised on a national scale.

D. M. DATTA

## THE BELIEF OF A PHILOSOPHER

'I BELIEVE that in all the universe is no duality, but only the One of which we are a part.

'I believe that what we call "Good" is undeveloped perfection, and that what we call "Evil" is only undeveloped good.

'I believe that every form of life from the lowest forms of what we call matter is on its upward way of evolution and will inevitably attain perfection, enlightenment, and union with the Source.

'I believe that with our fallible senses and brain we cannot attain to the knowledge of absolute truth, but only to the knowledge of the relative truth, and that therefore we live in a delusive world created by the false perception of our senses, but that around and about us lies universe of things as they are, which has been beheld by some highly enlightened or perfected souls in flashes of Cosmic Consciousness, and that it should be the aim of all to attain to this true perception.

'I believe that the road to this perception is indicated in different degrees of truth in all the faiths of all the world and that they should be regarded as the same statement in different languages, each suited to the environment and the stage of evolution of the soul as well as of the body, and

that the former is accomplished by the return to the stage of earthly experience, which in the Orient is known as the process of reincarnation, though it may well be that the bold statement is to be regarded as only a symbol of a truth we cannot approach in its true verity.

'I believe that Love, human and divine is the great prison-breaker of that prison of the self-hood in which each of us lives barred and guarded until, like the flower within the buried bulb, he breaks his way to freedom, sunlight, and the knowledge of the universe as it really is, thus attaining the crown of the process of evolution and release from the need of what we term further earthly experience.

'And I believe that for those who have attained true enlightenment, supernormal, but never superhuman, powers are available, and that in all the universe there is no possibility of the breaking of natural law, but only of understanding its supernormal possibilities.

'I believe that grief is ignorance.

'I believe that the sole prayer should be:

*From the unreal lead us to the Real.  
From our blindness lead us to Light.  
From evolution lead us to Perfection.*

Break down in us the prison of our false individuality and self-hood. And unite us with the One who is in us and of whom we are parts. Teach us to rejoice in our own nobility and to recognise our divinity that in

blindness we may never sin against our true self. Give us therefore to see death and life as dreams vanishing in the dawn of the Soul.'

L. ADAMS BECK

Quoted from *The House of Fulfilment*

## SOME IMPRESSIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IN AMERICA

**Bhai Manilal G. Parekh** is a religious preacher and author. He has travelled widely both in the East and the West as a Christian or Brahmo Samaj Missionary. Subsequently he became an independent teacher of Bhagavata Dharma. A very interesting glimpse of the various phases of Religious life in America is given in this paper, purely from personal impressions.—Ed.

THE first impression I had of the religious life of the United States of America was a very peculiar one. I landed in San Francisco on a Friday, and the Sunday after that I was very kindly invited to attend the service in a Presbyterian church in Berkeley where I had made my headquarters. It was the month of August, and the service began punctually at 11 a.m., in this fairly big church situated in a street which did not have much traffic. The very first thing that struck me, however, was the darkness within the church. I am not sure whether the lights were on or not. After a few minutes I began to feel the place stuffy and became so uncomfortable that seeing my plight my friend opened some windows so that we might have some fresh air.

This, together with the service in which there was nothing unusual but which must have seemed to me a bit

different from what I was used to in Christian churches in India, owing to its present setting, gave an appearance of sombreness to this Christian worship, and I wondered if Christianity of the western world—and practically that is almost all that is known of Christianity—had not derived at least a part of its sombre character from the climatic and other circumstances in the Western countries.

This feeling was confirmed wherever I went not only in the United States but in the different countries of Europe such as England, France, Italy, etc. Everywhere I found the religion of Jesus bound up in dull-coloured, semi-dark churches, and in spite of all the wonders of art that have been bestowed upon this religion in such abundance—and let me add that perhaps there is nothing greater in the world of art than this—one misses here the simple touch of Nature, which makes not only all the world akin but which brings even heaven and earth closer to each other. The blue sky that is the wonder of wonders, and of which Emerson said that he could not conceive even Paradise having anything better, the fresh air which perhaps is the best symbol of the spirit of man as well as that of God, and the glorious sunlight which is another, and perhaps the greatest, symbol of Divinity—

these are shut out from the churches and consequently the religion of Jesus has been made poorer and even artificial. I realized this more than ever on a warm day in the month of October, in South Barbara, when in one of the churches where I was preaching at noon, the miserable electric lights were on while the sun was shining in all his glory in the sky, and all the windows were closed so that the place was as stuffy as it could be.

It is not easy to associate Jesus with these things. Evidently he was not at home in the temple at Jerusalem nor in the synagogues. His free spirit was far happier under the open sky and on the top of mountains, on the lakes and on riversides, in the fields and ever on the highways and byways. The *Gospels* are full of the fragrance of the lilies, the chirrup of the birds, and the atmosphere of the hills and forests. Even the noise of the market-places is not out of place in them.

Perhaps it is just in this that there lies the true measure of the distance between Jesus and his followers. I believe it was Emerson who said that he saw more of the spirit of Jesus in the woods and on the lakes than in the churches. I remained in the United States about two years in all, in the course of two visits that I paid to that country; but only once I met a man who felt like this and had a prophetic note in what he saw. I found him on a Sunday morning in the commons in Boston enjoying his communion with and through Nature—perhaps better than what most people do in the churches. By birth a Catholic of Irish origin, he had given up his belief in orthodox Christianity, but there was a freshness and

soundness about his views on religion and life which reminded me of the Prophets.

All this is, perhaps, a digression. But in what I have said here, I have noted a real difference between the Eastern and the Western religion or temperament, or both together. I wonder if this sombreness can be traced partly to the Jewish origin of the Christian religion. The Jewish synagogues, whether in the United States or in India, have certainly this quality in them, whereas Islam and Christianity and the Syrian Church, which last came to India more than fifteen centuries back, are different in spite of their Jewish origin. This may mean that the original tendency towards sombreness in Christianity which it derives from Judaism has been emphasized and developed in the West owing to its climate.

Whatever it may be, my first contacts in the United States were with the Liberals, almost exclusively. I was associated for the first few months of my stay with a very liberal theological institution and through this I came to know Liberalism and Modernism pretty well. This was in some ways a revelation both as regards the extent to which they had spread and the character of them. While in India I had read and heard a great deal about the spread of Liberal thought in the United States; but what I saw was very different from what I had conceived. I found the lines of demarcation not only between various sects but even between shades of belief more or less indistinct almost to the vanishing point, and except the extreme Fundamentalists almost every Communion seemed riddled with Liberalism. The institution with which I was associated was

preparing ministers and in spite of the fact that it was an extremely liberal one, and had even carried a bad name for this, students from several Communion were there qualifying themselves for ministerial work in their respective churches.

Nearly a quarter of a century back in my early youth I had made an intimate acquaintance with such heterodox writers as James Martineau and Channing; and then there was a development in my own religious life and belief, which had landed me in the heart of orthodox Christianity. Imagine my surprise then when I found a well-known professor from Austria going to various theological seminaries in the United States of America and saying in his lectures things which were even more radical than what I had learnt years back. After hearing his first lectures I asked him whether that was not just what had been taught by men like Martineau half a century back, and he was candid enough to admit that it was.

I had not realized before I went to the States that modernism had left the old orthodox belief so far behind or that it had spread to such an extent. This was to me a matter of real surprise. That we in India should be ignorant of this is due to the fact that the Christian Missions which are more or less the only representatives of western Christianity do not represent all the shades of it, and that even those Missions which are the spokesmen of such liberal forms of Christianity as Congregationalism, Methodism, etc., are apt to show themselves more orthodox than they actually are because of this desire to show a united front against non-Christian religions and also to press

into the full service the belief in the sanctity of tradition and the authority of the scripture among a people who still represent largely the old theological stage of life.

There was another surprise waiting for me and this was in a matter when I had expected it the least. Some years back while talking to a young Anglican Missionary in India on the question of Modernism, in reply to my question as to where exactly the Modernists differed from the Unitarians, he told me that they were greater believers in the immanence of God, and then we agreed that they were more like the Hindus in this belief of theirs. I found this verified on a large scale all over the States. I came across a number of eminent theologians in both the east and the west of the U.S.A., and the impressions that several of them (and these were some of the most spiritually-minded among them) left on my mind was that they were very like the Hindus of the corresponding class in their attitude towards life in general and religion in particular. It was to me a most welcome sight to see these precious men in the Western world (who, we are told by our Missionary friends, are so different from us in religion) approximating to a type that was but too common in India almost ever since the day of Gautama Buddha. To see and know these men was to realize the hollowness and artificial character of much in the Missionary Movement; and in their presence many of the Missionaries who put on perhaps an extra amount of theological rigidity in heathen lands, where they go to work, if only to justify their presence and profession, stood self-condemned.

I do not know what truth there is



in the affirmation made by Count Keyserling in his statement to the effect that Modernism is the result of the influence of Hindu thought on Christianity. It is possible there might have been some direct influence; but there is not a shadow of doubt that Hinduism and especially higher Hinduism has exercised indirect influence on Christianity as the latter has influenced Hinduism in its own turn. Two such religions, each with so much to its credit, could not meet without some kind of assimilation on both sides, and I found this to be the case on the other side of the World just as I had found it to be true in India. But above all I was happy to see that the spiritual values were more or less the same everywhere, and wherever people rose above theology, which very often divides, and entered the spiritual world, they trod common ground and met another as fellow-citizens of the kingdom of God whatever be their respective faiths.

In addition to this mutual assimilation between Hindu and Christian thought which has been taking place for over a century and which is found here as elsewhere, I found a good deal of interest on the part of American people in Hindu thought. This is the case especially in the west of the U.S.A., where the Theosophical Society has its headquarters and where many Swamis are to be found. I came across many people especially in California who knew almost as much as I did about re-incarnation and Karma, and were ever desirous to know more about Hinduism. I never realized until I went to the United States what great services had been rendered by the Theosophical Society to India by creating this deep interest

in the minds of many people in Hinduism and in Indian problems. The only Swamis who are doing some kind of substantial work are those belonging to the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement.

If cremation be any test of the measure of the spread of Liberalism, then surely the facts, as I learnt them, are astounding. I was told that in California about seventy-five per cent of the people practise cremation, whereas in the east about twenty-five per cent practise it. I give these figures only to correction, but it is undoubted that cremation is increasingly coming in favour in the United States, and this is a testimony to the fact that quite a large part of the population has ceased to believe in some of the fundamental tenets of Christianity. The Hindus, of all people, have used this method of disposing of their dead systematically for centuries, and in India it is only they who practise it. It was therefore quite a welcome surprise to me to see the American people taking to this method on such a large scale, and though I could not trace any direct or indirect influence of Hinduism in this, I could see that this was a triumph of liberal principles.

After staying for about four months with the Modernists I was thrown in the midst of the Fundamentalists. It was at first a mere accident that took me to them, and my first impression of them was as good as it could be. It was their beautiful devotional life that attracted me to them, and after four months of close association with them, I can say that I have rarely seen anything finer than their prayer-life. If living religion is to be found anywhere in the United States, it certainly is here

in the midst of these Fundamentalists, especially those belonging to a very well-known institution of theirs.

I very much wish, however, that this were also that could be said of them. If they represent the strength of Protestantism, unfortunately they represent the weakness thereof also. I should say that this weakness in them is greater inasmuch as Protestantism in their hands has become a persecuting faith and thus some of the worst characteristics thereof have manifested themselves in them. The chief defect of Fundamentalism is that it is full of bigotry and fanaticism of the worst kind. I hope I am not doing any injustice to them when I say that many a time I felt, while amongst them, that if persecution were possible in these days they would not have hesitated even to burn people who differed from them as was done by their forefathers. Besides, their Liberalism is soul-killing, and even now I find it hard to understand how they combine some sort of real spirituality with so much bigotry and Liberalism. It is often said that true religion goes hand in hand with bigotry, and the statement is true to some extent, but in the Fundamentalists the bigotry has far outrun their true religiousness, and consequently as a class they are exceedingly rigid, intolerant, and bitter. One misses in them those finer qualities of delicacy of feeling, gracefulness of character, sweetness of disposition, etc., which are invariably found in men who have come close to God. Somehow or other I could not help feeling that they had missed the chief Christian grace, viz., charity, and consequently there was a hardness and roughness about them which was even repelling. A very liberal Christian, while com-

paring them with the Roman Catholics said that out of the ten Catholics nine may be religious in the true sense of the term, whereas among the former there would be only one. Allowing for a certain amount of exaggeration, the statement does contain a grain of truth, and the Catholics do have on the whole a deeper spirituality and larger charity.

I wonder if Fundamentalism suffers from too much association with vested interests in the United States. Perhaps it is in the same position in the U.S.A. that the Russian church was accused of being in Russia by the Bolsheviks. It stands for *status quo* in social and political matters, and hence the divorce between the religious and the secular life so often visible among them. The Liberals have an advantage over them inasmuch as they are better able to co-ordinate the various elements of life, if only for this reason that their feet are never removed from solid earth. On the other hand the religion of the Fundamentalists is other-worldly, but not sufficiently so as to give them enough detachment from the world. The Roman Catholics are more successful in this matter. The Fundamentalists try to keep their place both in heaven and on earth at the same time—a weakness which is perhaps characteristic of Protestantism on the whole, and hence the awkwardness and difficulty of its position when it is allied with the powers that be.

The contrast that exists in this matter between Fundamentalism and Liberalism was fully realized by me in a speech made by a great leader of the Fundamentalists. He is a very well-known author of many deeply spiritual books, and his addresses on

purely religious subjects were some of the very best I have ever heard. One day, however, going out of his way he attacked Liberalism, and reaching the climax, as it were, in his arguments, he said in reference to Liberalism, 'It is an attack on our commercial system.' Whatever lurking admiration and sympathy I had with Fundamentalism disappeared that moment, and I could not but class this school of thought along with what is called the Varnashrama Dharma in India—the school that upholds the socio-economic system known as the Caste System as an integral part of Hinduism. In a way the latter is much more spiritual on the whole as it is neither so liberal in its interpretation of its scriptures, the Vedas, nor so bigoted and intolerant.

While I am dealing with Fundamentalism I might mention Macpherson of whose work I saw just a little while I was in California, and heard a great deal everywhere. Indeed, she is very different from those who represent Fundamentalism as such, even though her theology is in every respect the same as theirs, and let no one think that because I happen to put them together that I class them in the same category. In fact they are poles apart. There is something in her, however, which, in spite of all that can be said against her, attracts to her people who will not find themselves at home in other churches. She has real sympathy for the unfortunate and the miserable which draws to her thousands who would be shown the cold shoulder elsewhere. Most churches are too decent and respectable for such people whereas her church is full of fervour and warmth. It is full of a sort of atmosphere where it is easy for the sinner of the world to

give a free vent to his feelings and thus be the better for it. I attended her church only once, when I found her preaching to be both in substance and manner equal to any in the United States, and the way she influenced the seething mass in her church with the magic of her personality was remarkable. I was amazed at the warm personal love which her congregation has for their 'sisters'—a love which perhaps few persons are able to inspire. She is a psychological phenomenon and I can only explain her as a dual personality in the sense that she carries two selves in her which may often be at war with one another.

What surprised me most, however, in the religious world of the United States was Christian Science. I never knew until I went to the States what a power it is, and it is a power for good. It is something unique and original and has been affecting the life of hundreds and thousands not only in this country but all over the world. Many of its followers are men and women, morally and spiritually earnest people, and whatever they put their hands to in a corporate capacity is remarkable for its thoroughness and superiority of design and execution. The Christian Science movement is an outstanding example of this. The mother Church in Boston is a still greater one. The very first service in a Christian Science church that I attended in a small town was distinguished by qualities of austerity and simplicity and of directness and depth which were not always found in churches belonging to other Communion, and which were uniformly found in Christian Science churches. Here was no help sought from such arts as dramatics or rhetoric as is

done elsewhere, and yet the total effect was such as to make these arts look cheap and vulgar. I did not attend more than four or five services on the whole nor am I a convert to this kind of belief, and therefore with all the greater freedom I can give the testimony that altogether Christian Science is a noble form of belief and America deserves to be congratulated for having given birth to it.

I was told that in the first edition of her book, which is the scripture of this movement, Mrs. Eddy had put in several passages from the Hindu Scriptures. This is quite understandable because her philosophy is very like what is known as the Vedanta of Shankara which is undoubtedly one of the most important phases of Hindu religion and philosophy. Moreover Mrs. Eddy's debt to Emerson is well-known and the influence of Hindu thought over the latter is undoubted. Whatever it be, in Mrs. Eddy's hand this philosophy has become positive and practical. She has combined it with the practical aspects of Christianity and added a peculiarly American flavour to it in the very great emphasis laid on health, success, and prosperity in her Movement. In her hands it has become entirely a new thing, a genuine American product and perhaps the best that there has been so far.

I wonder if the indirect influence of Christian Science, which I might call a sort of spiritual positivism, has been even greater than the direct one. It is perhaps due to this movement, to some extent at least, that all over the United States even the orthodox churches give less and less place to such negative ideas as those of disease, old age, death, etc. I was also

surprised at the extraordinary interest shown in healing in the churches, especially in the west. I do not mean to say that Christian Science is infallible or perfect in all its belief and practice, but I have no doubt that it is one of the most powerful religious movements of this country and that it is performing miracles of healing, both physical and spiritual.

I very much wish I had known more of the Roman Catholic church in the United States than I actually did, but what little I saw was sufficient to show to me that the Roman Catholics are the same the world over. There is some slight difference, however, in the Catholics of the United States, and that is due to the peculiar position they have in this country. They are in a minority and are looked upon with a certain amount of distrust and suspicion which are there even though they may not be seen on the surface. Because of this the Catholics have to be on their guard, and this acts as a wholesome check as well as incentive to show themselves at their best. Christianity, as every other religion, shows itself at its best under persecution or when it is not allied with temporal powers, and in this the Roman church has an advantage over the Protestants in the United States. Moreover, even the most ardent Catholics, consciously as well as unconsciously, cannot but partake of the freedom which is in the air in this country, a thing which adds greatly to the health and strength of this Church.

Compared with the Catholics, the Jews seemed to be in a much better position in some respects. Of them also I saw just a little and hence I

speak subject to correction. They seem to occupy an influential position in the cultural and religious life of the nation, and I can explain this only on the ground that the Jews as a race are mentally more virile and financially better off than others. There is also no danger of proselytization from their side and hence they are treated better. Due to all this many of the Rabbis seemed to be on a par with some of the liberal thinkers of the country and it was with delightful surprise that I saw Dr. Fosdick conducting his services with his congregation in a Jewish synagogue for months together while his own church was being built. Similar things happen in many places. The inevitable result of this is that there is cultural assimilation on both sides, and I wonder if the time is far when it will be difficult to draw a line from the religious point of view between the Jews or the Christians, both of the liberal school.

Such a consummation would be a great gain on both sides. I wonder if this is the climax that Christendom has been waiting for all these centuries. While in the States, seeing this central assimilation, I again and again felt that if Zionism be cultural and spiritual expansion on the part of the Jews, then surely this is the country where it has already found its home. Compared to this what the Jews are trying to do in Palestine looks like a vulgar show managed by financiers, capitalists and politically-minded religious leaders of the Jews. On the other hand the Jews are finding themselves for the first time on a national scale after centuries of homelessness and persecution, and when they attain their majority, not only this country but

the world will be the richer on this account.

There are people of another race here who are more in number than the Jews and who also are full of great possibilities for themselves as well as for this country of their adoption. These are the Negroes who too are finding themselves, though rather slowly. Already they have contributed to the religious culture of this nation something of extraordinary importance in the shape of Negro spirituals. They are something new in the history of Christendom, a singular contribution to its culture and it interprets Christianity as few things do. The crucifixion of this race from which they are born has furnished an original and a marvellous commentary to that of Jesus and also to much in the Old Testament.

The Negro perhaps has no equal in qualities such as simplicity of heart, capacity for suffering, and religious emotion of the tenderest kind. When these qualities and many more with which he is possessed come to their fruition not only the United States but the entire world will gain thereby. The Negroes perhaps are the most religious-minded people in this country, and in that also they are a great asset to the nation. The immense popularity of the Negro spirituals all over the world and that of the play *Green Pastures* in New York, a play wherein is brought out the marvellous childlike simplicity of the Negroes' heart to the great admiration and even purification of all who see it, is in itself an eloquent testimony to their unique spiritual quality. What has been done so far, however, is only an earnest of much more to come from this race.

Among the various Protestant Communion, I found Methodism too much taken up with the organizational and institutional side of life to leave much room for the inspirational element which was its distinguishing characteristic when it started. I had known something of the Missions belonging to Methodist Episcopal Church before I left India and within a very short time of my stay in the States I felt that this church was the informal State Church of the United States. When I said this to some friends, they replied that it was not far from the truth. Being this, this Church is filled with a world-imperialism which is second only to that of the Roman Church. The latter, however, is truly universal in many respects whereas the Methodist Episcopal Church is pre-eminently American and it is doubtful if it can be anything else. It is political and temporal through and through, whereas the Roman Church is saved from being this by its celibate priesthood and by Orders of monks and nuns who have given up the world and with it much that would tie them to family or country or race.

The Congregationalists have preserved much of their spiritual outlook and vitality of old days. Their religious fervour and social idealism, both of which are beautifully harmonized in them, are an asset to the nation, and they rightly form one of the most important religious groups in the country. The same is true of the Episcopalians, though to a lesser degree, and they suffer in comparison because of their adherence to a tradition which has very little meaning in this new and free world. The Anglican Church even in England is

not always sure of its position in spite of the fact that it is the most powerful Church there, and hence it is no wonder if the uncertainty, hesitation, and compromise that belong to the Anglicans are reflected even to a greater extent among the Episcopalians of the United States. It is true that the latter are free from the shackles of temporal power which is not the case with the former, but somehow or other they give one the impression of having changed these shackles for those of too much cultural and religious dependence on the Anglicans.

I did not realize before I went to the States that the Unitarians had played so large a part in building up the new traditions of spiritual and social freedom which characterizes this country. From what I saw of Boston and places round about, all of them filled with rich associations of the earliest days of puritanic settlement, I could see that the rise of American Democracy and Unitarianism had gone hand in hand, and that even now the Unitarians are a very influential class of people in matters of culture and social service. Their teaching today, however, has become too negative to be a great spiritual power that it was in the old days when it produced such teachers as Channing, Emerson, etc. While the more orthodox Churches are tending towards the position that was held by the Unitarians about two generations back, the latter are tending towards Humanism.

This tendency towards Humanism is perhaps, universal among the Liberals. I wonder if the time will come very soon when the real antagonism in the religious world of the United States will be not bet-

ween Fundamentalism and Liberalism as it is today, but between the former and Humanism. The social gospel of Humanism has made itself felt everywhere and some of the most eminent thinkers and preachers of the country are its representatives. The passion for social justice with which Humanists are filled would shame a great deal of so called philanthropy; and this passion of theirs reaches the furthest corners of the earth and embraces every section of humanity regardless of caste, colour, or creed. There are prophets among these Humanists, comparatively far more than in any other group, and their soul is aflame with righteous indignation at much that is being done in the name of religion.

It is in this that the churches in the United States are failing grievously. The spirit of prophecy is rarely allowed to dominate the counsels or the preaching in them. A very able assistant pastor of a big Baptist church defined the churches as property-owning and property-protecting concerns, and I think he was right in his description. I might even add the word property-earning to these. Many of these churches which are built at the expense of hundreds of thousands of dollars, and the annual income of which run into tens of thousands leave very little room for the functioning of the spirit of prophecy, and most of the pastors are compelled to make it their first concern to see that this annual budget is balanced properly. I know of churches in which the Board of Directors make it a condition before engaging the services of a new pastor that he should secure a certain number of members for the congregation within a set time. The

ministers in most Protestant Communion there suffer from the overlordship of lay people with the necessary consequence that whatever spirit of prophecy may be latent in them is quenched and they become mere echoes instead of original voices from the High that they should be.

Short of this—and this is no ordinary lack—the preaching in the churches is on a fairly high level. The majority of the pastors are fairly well educated and their intellectual level is perhaps higher than in any other country. The ministers, however have to invoke the aid of various kinds of artificial measures such as dramatics, social amusements, etc., to keep their hold on their flocks. To me it was a matter of real surprise that in every service there was some feature or other which derived its interest chiefly from dramatics. The wife of a minister while criticizing the methods usually employed in the churches to make the service as attractive as possible said that her idea of the proper kind of service was that each should go by himself or herself to the church which should be open at all hours of the day, and pray and meditate as it suited one without having anything to do jointly with others. She did not know that she was describing what is a common practice with the Hindus. The Roman Catholics, too, pray and meditate as they like in the churches, and they do this not only at other times but even while the service is going on. The Quakers among the Protestants are perhaps the only people who have this kind of personal liberty in their divine service. Protestantism on the whole has tried to socialize religion, and it is only a step from that to the secu-

larization thereof. As regards the social amusements such as dances etc., a Japanese Christian minister told me that if Jesus came back today he would be more wrathful with churches where these things are practised than he was in the past with the temple authorities for setting up a market in the temple.

The question may well be asked, is America a religious country? It is a difficult question to answer; but I shall try to do so. I was surprised from the first to see the churches fuller than I had expected them to be. This is a fine feature of American life which shows that the people of this country have a real respect for religion. In this they compare very favourably with some European people. I did not hear or see even once such caricatures of religion as are but too common in one of the European countries. The people of the United States have even a superstitious vein in them, which on the whole is a very commendable thing. Undoubtedly this is exploited on a large scale, for in this country there are no less than two hundred and fifty thousand fakes as I learnt from figures that were officially given some time back. But superstition is very often a shell of something higher and the American people do have curious and even inquisitive mind in regard to spiritual matters.

This is perhaps all that can be said about the people of the United States in general. As for personal religion I found it grievously lacking in almost all circles. Whatever intellectual, or traditional, or conventional interest there is in religion is mostly on the surface. They are

very different from the Hindus in this matter who perhaps are too religious and err on the other side. No one, however, will accuse the Americans of being mystical or spiritually-minded, and perhaps they are less so than even the English people. It is true the Americans are composed of many peoples and races, some of which are deeply religious, such as the Irish, the Italians, the Negroes, etc., but the pioneering character of the country, the lack of tradition, and the present fastness of life due to industrial mechanization on an unparalleled scale have unfortunately left little room for the religious faculty to develop among a people with whom the economic interests were the dominant ones to start with.

Closely allied with this lack of personal religion is the lack of reverence in social relations, and the result of this is very unfortunate for the country. This is not all. However, Americanization of the world is proceeding a pace, and no one knows which country will be left behind in the race for fastness of life. And possibly, when most of the countries of the world have gone sufficiently far in this march, it may be the turn of America to cry a halt, simply because it has been the first in the race and has known all the sweets and bitters thereof. It may be that by that time it will have mastered the secret of attaining the harmony between the inner and the outer life, however complex the latter may be, and it may also teach this secret to the world. It will be then a new day for religion not only for this land but for the whole humanity.

MANILAL C. PAREKH



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**Some Sayings of the Buddha: according to the Pali Canon. TRANSLATED BY F. L. WOODWARD, WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY SIR FRANCIS YOUNG-HUSBAND. WORLD'S CLASSICS. OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS. PRICE 2 SH.**

The progressive series of the most famous works of the English language called the World's Classics, including also some of the best works of other languages in translation, offered in a size adopted to the pocket and at a low price, require no introduction to anyone who has a bowing acquaintance with English literature. The inclusion of the present volume in it speaks for the importance of the volume as well as the high standard of the series. In this beautiful volume one gets an intimate knowledge of the heart and brain of one of the greatest personalities of the world, Lord Buddha, and the early development of a wonderful religion. The sayings given in it are selected from a wide range of Buddhist canonical literature and the passages chosen are the best in many ways. Tedious repetitions are carefully avoided and the entire contents is arranged under eighteen logical sections with appropriate sub-headings. The main headings are:— Beginnings, The Early Order, The Short Section, Teachings, The Tongue, The stability of Societies, In Time of Sickness, Charity, Happiness in the World, Advice—Mostly to Laymen, Life, Death, and After, The path of Holiness, Devadatta, Doctrines, True and False, The Buddhas Show the Way, The Guide, Nibbana Defined, and Last Days.

Leaving the *Gospel of Buddha*, it is hard to find a better and more authentic selection to be recommended to an earnest student who wants to know about the teachings and personality of Buddha other than the present one. There are innumerable passages in this precious book which embody truths helpful and acceptable to all desirous of peace and blessedness irrespective of time, place, and religion.

**A Volume of Eastern and Indian Studies: PRESENTED TO PROFESSOR**

**F. W. THOMAS, C.I.E. ON HIS 72ND BIRTH-DAY. EDITED BY S. M. KATRE, M.A., PH.D. (LONDON) AND P. K. GODE, M.A. KARNATAK PUBLISHING HOUSE, BOMBAY. PAGES 318. PRICE RS. 10. PRINTED ON ART PAPER.**

It is most fitting that one who has been toiling long in the field of Indian studies should receive a volume of tribute, containing scientifically written papers bearing on the subjects in which he himself is interested, from the hands of his confreres all over the world. Professor Thomas toiled devotedly and efficiently in the field of Indology for over half a century and is still active. An up-to-date bibliography of his works and papers given in the volume under notice gives an idea of the extent and range of his work and the rare light he has been able to shed on many an obscure problem connected with Sanskrit and Pali history and philology. The best of his years were spent as the Boden professor of Sanskrit in the Oxford University and as librarian of the India Office Library where he was immensely helpful to several scholars working in ancient History.

The present volume which is artistically printed, contains over fifty significant contributions made by orientalists and savants representing various countries of the world. We find among them the names of Professors H. W. Bailey of Cambridge, Jules Bloch of Paris, G. Coedès of Hanoi, A. Debrunner of Bern, F. Edgerton, M. B. Emeneau, E. H. Johnston of Oxford, H. Marchal of Paris, H. Oertel of Munchen, V. Pisani of Roma, Louis Renou of Paris, W. Ruben of Ankara, S. K. Belvalkar, D. R. Bhandarkar, S. K. De, V. R. R. Dikshitar, Ganganath Jha, B. A. Saletore, R. Shamasastri, V. D. Sukthankar, and many others of repute in the field of Indology. Most of the contributions bear the hall-mark of patient research and critical acumen of a high order. The hints they throw, although they may not appear to have very great value as independent articles,

are sure to help the future student engaged in the study and representation of ancient Indian culture in its literary, philological, and various other aspects. We recommend the volume to all libraries and colleges where the critical study of ancient Indian literature and history is advanced.

**Prakatarthavivaranam Volume II (Sanskrit):** EDITED BY DR. T. R. CHINTAMANI, M.A., PH.D., SENIOR LECTURER IN SANSKRIT, UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS. MADRAS UNIVERSITY SANSKRIT SERIES NO. 9. PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS. PRICE RS. 7.

The general features of the second volume of this edition of a rare and important sub-commentary of the *Brahma-sutras* are the same as those of the first volume published in 1935 and reviewed in our issue for June 1937. Besides the Bhashya and the commentary, this volume contains a very brief Introduction which informs that the editors contemplate to bring out another volume after some time, discussing the various problems connected with *Brahmasutra* literature; a conspectus of the Bhashya and the commentary, which gives a vivid glimpse of the contents of the Sankarabhashya and the distinguishing features of the sub-commentary; works and authors referred to in the *Prakatarthavivaranam*; alphabetical lists of the Adhikaranas and the first words of the Sūtras; and an Index of citations occurring both in the Bhashya as well as the commentary. There is also an interesting *Prastāvika* at the beginning, stating in lucid Sanskrit some of the important ideas contributed by the present commentary to Advaitic thought.

The text of the *Sankarabhashya* has been printed several times all over India and excellent editions of it are available, although they are not critical. The inclusion of the Bhashya has enhanced the bulk of these volumes considerably. But it is a great convenience—the more so because it is printed in bold, clear type, and fully punctuated. The most important part of these volumes is the commentary which is published for the first time and which is sure to shed light on the doctrines and history of the Advaita system. The *Mss* used in preparing the previous volume alone are used in pre-

paring this portion also, as no further *Mss* material has been discovered since. But as they are not unsatisfactory the text presented is almost flawless and good.

As the learned editor informs, the *Prakatartha* which quotes Udayana and is quoted by Anandagiri must have been produced in the tenth or eleventh century. And on page 379 we get a clear reference to the *Bhagavata* and a definite statement that Gaudapada is the disciple of Suka-deva and a spirited defence of Maya theory. These facts clearly show that the *Bhagavata* was as much a revered scripture in the tenth or eleventh century as it is today. We have referred to this point just to indicate the fact that the publication of the work is of great importance in many ways.

Attempts have been made by previous editors of the Bhashya of Sri Sankara to trace the sources of the passages cited therein, among whom George Thibaut and Paul Deussen deserve specially to be mentioned. In his translation made about 40 years ago the former has indicated the sources of most of the quotations in the Bhashya. The present editor has not been able to indicate the original place of many of the quotations which they have not traced. In the very first passage of Sankara's Bhashya on *Brahma-sutras* II:3.6 Sankara quotes a Vedantic text: *Na ka chana mad bahirdha vidyā'ti*, which Thibaut translates: Outside that which is there is no knowledge—evidently he reads *sud* for *mad*. But all books we consulted including the present edition gives the reading 'mad'. And none has traced the source of the passage. This shows that we require a critical edition of the text of the Bhashya itself.

While appreciating the great merits of the publication we cannot refrain from pointing out the unsatisfactoriness of the Index of citations. This Index does not give the source of some of the well-known passages which could have been easily traced. For instance the verses defining Bhaga and Bhagavan occurring in *Vishnu-purana* VI: 5.74 & 75 quoted on page 1108 are indexed without indicating the source. In the Bhashya on *Brahmasutra* I: 3.28 two verses are quoted; *Namarupe*

*cha* &c. and *Sarvesham* &c. Thibaut traces the latter verse to Manu I: 21 and the former is left out untraced. In the present Index it is wrongly stated that the verse left untraced by Thibaut is the 21st verse of the first chapter of Manu, whereas actually it occurs with a variant reading in *Vishnupurana* I: 5.64 which perhaps Thibaut was not aware of. Much is not either gained by stating that a particular verse is from Mahabharata without indicating the chapter and verse. We are of opinion that some of the verses left untraced could have been located with some trouble. This however does not detract from the merits of the publication and we are sure that all lovers of Sanskrit literature and especially students of philosophy will share our own feeling of obligation to the University for bringing to light this rare commentary of one of the greatest philosophical works of the world.

**Srimadbhagavadgiteyu—First Six Chapters (Kannada):** PUBLISHED BY C. M. VIJAYARAGHAVACHAR, RETIRED CIRCLE INSPECTOR, EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT, BASAVANGUDI, BANGALORE. PRICE RS. 3. ROYAL SIZE, PAGES 760.

This is a very valuable Kannada edition of the divine *Bhagavadgita*. It is true that all have the right to understand and interpret the verse of the *Gita* according to each one's light and learning. But there is no gainsaying the fact that if one has to reap the full benefit from the study of the *Gita*, there can be hardly any other method than to take the guidance of the great Acharyas like Sri Sankara and Sri Ramanuja, who were not only the representatives of a long tradition of spiritual knowledge concentrated in the scriptures and supremely erudite and keen but also lived the teachings of the *Gita* in a far deeper and truer way than we can conceive of in our lives today. Rightly therefore their commentaries enjoy the highest esteem. But the beauty and the wisdom which their works radiate are denied to persons who have not the suitable training especially by way of a thorough study of the Sanskrit language in which they are written as well as a traditional clue derived from suitable teacher under proper discipline. The book under review is a boon to those who are

not favoured with these conditions and at the same time are desirous of studying *Gita* for spiritual purposes. We are sure any one who could read and understand Kannada will be highly grateful for this thorough edition of the great book. It contains the text of the *Gita* and the Bhashya on it by Sri Ramanuja, printed in antique type, followed by an explanation of each sloka giving the meaning of each word, and adducing necessary facts from various scriptures for a connected understanding of the ideas; translations of Sri Ramanuja's Bhashya into Kannada giving the meaning of each word and explaining the doctrines in the light of the sub-commentary, *Tatparyachandrika* of Sri Vedantadesika; a critical estimate of the value of Visishtadvaita tenets in the light of the explanations given by other writers; explanation of the Gitarthasangraha subjoined to each chapter; a running translation of the *Gita* verses prefixed at the beginning; an intelligent synopsis to each chapter, verse by verse, put up at the end of each chapter; and an index to the verses. With this apparatus of learning undoubtedly it would not be difficult for anyone to grasp the meaning of both the text as well as of the remarkable commentary. The stamp of not only thoughtful scholarship but also a correct understanding of the true traditional meaning transmitted from worthy preceptors of the past nourished in a genuine environment of deep faith and true devotion cultivated for a long period can be seen throughout this explanation. The author has rightly named it the 'Acharyahridaya,' as undoubtedly it reveals the core of Visishtadvaitic teachings as given by the great saint Sri Ramanuja. We are eagerly waiting for the publication of the succeeding two parts. We sincerely pray that the learned author may be granted the divine grace not only for the fulfilment of this noble task but more of such spiritual deeds. The price fixed for the book is quite reasonable even for the purse of the common man who has religious inclinations, and we are sure the money spent in buying the book is an investment far more valuable than what one may not realize readily. We heartily recommend the book to all Kannada-knowing people

interested in religion, especially who are, of Visishtadvaitic persuasion.

**Ma Sarada Devi (Hindi):** PUBLISHED BY THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, NEW DELHI. PRICE THREE ANNAS.

This booklet of 29 pages, giving an account of the life and teachings of the

Holy Mother, formed a paper read on the occasion of the celebration of her birth-day anniversary at the Delhi Centre. This is the first Hindi publication on the Holy Mother and it may be hoped that it will attract the attention of the Hindi-speaking people to her great life, and the demand for a larger life will be felt in the near future.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### The General Secretary of the Mission on Tour

Srimat Swami Madhavananda, general Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, is on an inspection tour in the South. On the first of May he started from the Headquarters, stopping at Puri, Vizagapatam, and Rajahmundry en route for Madras. At Puri he addressed two meetings, one a general gathering and the other one of ladies. The Swamiji was given civil reception at Vizagapatam and at Rajahmundry, and addresses were also presented at both these places. At Vizag he laid the foundation-stone for the building in which the Mission centre there will be lodged at its completion. There was also a public meeting, in which crowds turned up, presided over by Dr. C. R. Reddi, Vice Chancellor of the Andhra University. The Swamiji gave an inspiring address on the 'Practice of Vedanta'. On the 9th morning he arrived at Madras, and on the 10th, the Akshayatriya day, he laid the foundation-stone of the new building of the Sarada Vidyalyaya (Ramakrishna Mission), to be constructed at an estimated cost of over a lakh and a half Rupees, on Sir Md. Oosman Road, (West of Panagal Park) Tyagarayanagar. On the same day he also performed the annual Mahabhishekam to Devi Saraswati in the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mylapore. He left for Colombo on the 15th, via Chidambaram, Trichi, and Rameswaram. He is to continue his inspection of the Centres in Malabar and Mysore in June and July. We give below a report (supplied through the kind courtesy of Mr. T. B. Venkata Rao, M.A., L.T.) of the speech given by Swami Madhava-

nanda on The Mission of Vedanta at Rajahmundry on the 7th of May, on the occasion when the Municipality of the place presented him with an address. He said:

Vedanta means the essence of the Vedas. The Vedas were not written by anyone. They represent the highest spiritual knowledge. Vedanta stands wholly on principles. It is not limited by the experience of the life of any one man. It is also possible for anyone to achieve those ancient truths which were seen and realized by the Rishis of old. This is a very great claim. And we are asked to share those great truths of the Vedanta. The Vedanta says that between the highest realized soul and the lowest man the difference is only one of degree, but not of quality. Be he the lowest of the low, give him an opportunity, and in time he will develop. If anyone realized the truths in the past it is possible for all of us too to realize them today or in the future. This is the greatest birth-right of man preached by Vedanta. Though incarnations show in their life, the method of reaching life's goal, it is upto us to practise along those lines and reach the self-same Goal.

The Vedanta preaches the fundamental and potential Divinity of man. Back of man there is Divinity. The moment man becomes conscious of it and attempts to manifest that Divinity, with the help of Vedanta, he can reach that highest Goal.

The Goal is the same for all. But according to the needs of particular groups of men special arrangements have to be made to reach it. Hence arose so many prophets and so many religions. Let man take up the process enjoined on the group

to which he belongs; and in time the fullest development will come. It is like the sun hidden behind dense clouds. As the thickness of the clouds decreases, the sun begins to shine forth. And in time, the sun shines in all his brilliance. The Vedanta says that we hypnotised ourselves into thinking that we are little beings. It urges on us to de-hypnotise ourselves; and the moment we succeed in doing so we manifest our full stature.

Swami Vivekananda found the Indian world full of the grossest ills. So to remedy it he urges the application of Vedanta to Indian life. India has enough of spirituality. She is not well off materially. She wants bread, hospitals, schools, relief works, etc., so that the animal man can find safety and then take to God.

The Sevashramas of the Ramakrishna Mission are the result of Swami Vivekananda's application of Vedantic truths to Indian conditions. He points out that we ought not to pity the poor, the sick, and the down-trodden, but that we should look upon them as Divinities and worship them.

Sri Chaitanya Deva formulated in two short words the essence of his teachings: Taste for His Name and Love for the creatures. But DAYA is pity. It is too big a word. Vedanta requires us to do everything in a spirit of service. It directs that there should be no patronising attitude. The whole universe is the manifestation of the Lord. He wears various masks and moves about in the form of the rich and the poor, the healthy and the sick, the wise and the ignorant, etc. Naturally, worship is proportionate to the manifestation. It should adapt itself to the particular and varying kind of manifestation of the Divinity. In Image worship we use flowers, leaves, etc. If we are worshipping Shiva, we use bael leaves; if it is Vishnu, we offer Tulasi leaves. Similarly, When He comes in the form of the poor we must use appropriate forms and articles of worship. And the result will be just the same. It brings about inner peace. The acceptance of our worship by the image or the Inner unseen Divinity, may not be perceptible to us. But, when we appropriately worship the Lord in the poor, we see satisfaction writ large on His face. In our Sevashra-

mas, we use the term Narayana Bhandar.

Besides this service in the spirit of worship, the Vedanta can do many other things. If the principle of unity in diversity is applied to daily life, many of our ills can be set right. There are a great variety of religious and other organisations, each attempting in its own way the improvement and amelioration of man. But still there is misery, unhappiness, and squalor around us. There is animality still rampant everywhere. If we realize that before us there are many Divine Forms, if we attempt to worship the inner Divinity of man in a spirit of sincerity, we can do much. God comes to you in the form of the poor, treat him as a brother. You may be yourself poor and may not be able to dole out money. But your kind words, nay, the very expression on your face will help him.

In the West, people look at us in a spirit of ridicule. They say, 'You preach the Divinity of man and the fundamental unity of all life; but your class distinctions are abominable and ridiculous; they belie your preachings.' This is due to our failure to apply Vedanta to daily life. And this in turn is due to ignorance. I do not preach levelling down of castes. But I want you to raise all, from the lowest Chandala, to Brahmanhood. Plant in him the idea of the Brahman within. Do this; and the dumb millions will see that life is worth living. They will realize that they are not born slaves.

We should improve the condition of the masses. The strength of a chain is to be gauged by its weakest link. The masses are indeed the backbone of the nation. And we have neglected our masses. This is the weakest link in our social chain. If we want esteem and not ridicule from the West, we must scrupulously apply the principles of Vedanta to life. We must look upon man as Divinity incarnate. It may be asked whether it is not heresy to do so. It is not. We simply do not understand the scriptures. Behind the Parayah and the Brahman is the same Lord. Open the scriptures and you will find it so. Just as behind all clay products there is the same clay, so also the diverse forms we see around us manifest various phases of Divinity.

The Vedanta says that for our different ills we alone are responsible and not God or other beings. Man is the architect of his fate. If we want to be gods, we have to bring about proper conditions. We need not blame others. If we are conscious of our heritage, let us boldly say 'yes' and assert the Divinity in us. Every progress made, in whatever sphere of life it may be, has been made only by faith in ourselves. And therefore, for the amelioration of our ills, we have to apply Vedantic principles to life with immense faith in our Divine heritage.

You may be a monist, qualified monist, or dualist. But your scriptures say that the human soul is eternal. Man suffers or enjoys according to his deeds. Only the Lord awards enjoyment or suffering according to those Karmas. Let us not say that fate rules us, but take our stand on the present and on our potential Divinity and manifest perfection. If the ignorant man of the present struggles to manifest Divinity, that state will come to him which made others great. The Vedanta gives us strength. It believes in rebirth. It says that we have taken birth to fulfil our desires. If we have the least little desire, it must be fulfilled in some birth or other. So true freedom comes in freeing ourselves from desires. Then alone we will have Mukti or Nirvana. The rest of the spiritual or other practices are but mere stepping stones. The highest will come when we realize our Divinity. Mere physical strength or others of the kind cannot secure freedom.

Taking up the idea of heaven—heaven is a lower state of existence in comparison with the majesty of your Divinity. You are the Atman—infinite Knowledge, Existence, Bliss. Let not ideas of heaven and hell tempt you. Take your stand on the present irrespective of results. From the position of a temple priest Sri Ramakrishna developed the highest spirituality. How? No doubt he received some help from his Gurus. But the greatest help he got was from his mind which was very pure and persevering. What is wanted is courage of conviction and untiring effort. You try your utmost for passing your examinations, or carrying on your business or other pursuits. Similarly for acquiring spirituality you must put forth

your best efforts. For this you need not go elsewhere. You have only to seek within. And whether you are asleep or awake, whatever work you may be doing, you are only urged to spiritualize the thing you are doing. If you are sleeping, sublimate it into Samadhi; if you are walking, do it in a spirit of Pradakshina to the Lord. Then, whatever you do will be an act of worship to the Lord. There is a Bengali song which says that whatever you do you should do thinking of the Lord. If you are taking meals, think you are offering food to the Lord within. If you are talking, do so in a spirit of praise to the Lord. Then every act of yours, and indeed your whole life, will become a regular worship of the Lord. Apply Vedanta to everyday life and all your life will become spiritualized and you will get the maximum results.

Life is fleeting; and, if before death overtakes, you gain a glimpse of your Inner Divinity, there will be no more coming and going, no more birth or death.

Sri Ramakrishna says that the Lord never keeps away from an earnest seeker. God reciprocates. If you proceed one step towards Him, He will come ten steps towards you with open arms. Whatever be your religion, try to approach Him as best as you can, with as much sincerity and earnestness of effort as you can, without jealousies or dissensions. Many try to force their ideas on others even before they realize their Divinity. And dissensions and jealousies arise. First try to reach the Goal before you try to bring others unto It. You will then realize that God is the Universal centre to which infinite number of radii converge. Therefore don't pay attention to differences. If not, terrible quarrels will arise. And these quarrels are due to fanaticism alone. The sooner better views prevail the better for us. And then we will have a heaven on earth. If we are true Indians, if we believe in the greatness of our ancestors, we must attempt at realizing Unity in diversity. If, in this way, we attempt to achieve the End of life, we can make much capital out of it, no matter how low we are.

May He encourage us to combat the ills of life so that we may pass out of this world with a smile on our face for having done what we could.

**Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama,  
Vizagapatam:**

**Foundation-stone laid**

From August 1938 a monastic worker has been staying mainly at Vizagapatam for organising the first formal centre of the Math and Mission in Andhra Desa. Friends quickly gathered round him; and while one gave him a house free of rent for residing and for the holding of regular classes, others contributed towards maintenance and purchase of books for a small library. Within a few months, Mr. Jean Herbert (of France) halted at Vizagapatam during the course of his Indian tour, and delivered a very impressive speech showing what Vedanta was doing and could do in the West. Swami Virajanandaji Maharaj, the President of the Math and Mission, and many other Swamis of the Order came one after the other; and their presence and speeches widened and sustained the interest of the public.

Efforts were being made in the meanwhile for acquiring a suitable site for locating the Ashrama. These bore fruit when, in the last week of April, the Madras Government sanctioned the alienation to the Mission of one acre and a half of land situated near the beach and a little away from the bustle of the town.

On 5th May, Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, Secretary of the Mission laid the foundation-stone for the Ashrama building in the presence of the Maharaja of Jeypore and a number of friends and admirers of the Mission. On 6th May the Swamiji worshipped in Sinhachalam Temple. In the evening a public meeting was held in the Municipal Hall with Dr. C. R. Reddi, Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University, in the chair. The Municipal microphone and loud-speaker arrangements made it possible for hundreds of people to hear everything while seated on the beach. Addresses of welcome were presented to the Swamiji by the chairman of the Municipality and by Mr. K. Ramabrahmam, the host of the Swamiji on behalf of the Municipality and of the public respectively. The Swamiji thanked them all for their kindness and the interest they have taken in the Mission. The President in his introductory as well

as concluding speeches paid a tribute to the memory of Sri Ramakrishna and showed how his teachings were universal in character. He also referred to the work of Swami Vivekananda and drew special attention to the Swami's Indian lectures and epistles. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. K. V. Ratnam, Public Prosecutor.

**The Ramakrishna Mission Students'  
Home and Shivananda Vidyalaya,  
Kalladiuppodai, Batticaloa.**

**Report for the year ending 29th Feb., 1940**

The expansion of the institution during the last ten years has enabled the Management to place its first report before the public.

(1) *Shivananda Vidyalaya*: This is situated in a site commanding a healthy atmosphere. From a small beginning this institution has grown steadily to its present size and position of a full-fledged Senior Secondary School preparing students for the S.S.C (Local) and Cambridge Senior Examination. The scheme of studies adopted is approved by the Department of Education. The school possesses well equipped laboratories for the practical study of Physics, Elementary Science, and Botany, all of which have been approved by the Department. The Electric Plant installed supplies the necessary amount of electricity to the institution. Beginning from 37 the strength of the school has now come to 150. The results of the Public Examinations held during the year were satisfactory.

In addition to the class-work, the school pays equal attention to the other useful activities. The students are provided with Volley-ball and foot-ball games and also the Yogic system of physical training. There are Literary and Debating Societies, and a Natural Science Association under the auspices of which the boys went on excursions to many places of Botanical interest. A Library containing about 2000 books, and a Reading Room which receives as many as a dozen periodicals were also open for the use of students. The fact that many prizes had been awarded to certain students of the school in the last Art and Handwork Exhibition proves

that the school also encourages Fine Arts and Handworks.

(2) *Students' Home*: This is a separate unit attached to the Vidyalyaya. This is under the direct control and supervision of the resident Swami. It provides free boarding, lodging, and education on the Gurukula system. Now it has 35 students. Festivals and birthdays of Lord Buddha, Sri Ramakrishna, and Swami Vivekananda were celebrated. For 29 students a maintenance grant of Rs. 75 per pupil per annum was received from the Government and the rest of the expenditure had to be met from public contributions.

(3) *Hostel*: There were 83 boarders in all in the hostel. It is in charge of two resident teachers and the internal management is looked after by the students themselves. The extension of the building of the hostel has become a pressing need.

The extracts from the visitor's Book attest to the progress of the institution.

#### **The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar.**

##### **Report for the year, 1939.**

This educational institution trains students on the ideals of the Ramakrishna Mission up to the Matriculation Examination. The Report gives an account of its various activities and needs. The number of students on the roll during the year was 151. The staff consisting of 18 workers was sufficient and qualified. All the seven boys in class X passed creditably; two secured first class and the rest second class. One of these obtained more than 80% marks in History. Classes in type-writing and gardening continued as usual; and all the boys who underwent these courses attained sufficient proficiency. The boys regularly took the advantage of daily physical exercises and out-door games. The health of the boys was very satisfactory throughout the year. The Debating Society worked regularly and the boys took keen interest in the proceedings. The library contained in all 3800 books, and the Reading Room received 32 periodicals in all.

The Charitable Dispensary, besides attending to the Vidyapith boys, gave Homoeopathic treatment to 4603 outdoor

patients during the year. Minor surgical cases, numbering more than 700, were also undertaken.

The Governor of Bihar visited the institution in 1938 January. He appreciated the work and granted a sum of Rs. 750 towards the construction of the gymnasium. From a donation of Rs. 1500, by a sympathiser the electric installation in the dormitories was completed. The report shows that the institution is in need of funds for its development in various directions—vocational section, improvement of the Library, as well as construction of a Shrine, and the gymnasium building.

#### **Sri Ramakrishna Math Charitable**

##### **Dispensary, Madras.**

##### **Report for the year, 1939.**

This Report records the work done during the 13th year of its existence. The growing utility of this Dispensary is proved by the rapid increase in the number of patients treated, the number treated in the recent two years being 1,68,335 as against the number 14,523 during the two successive years of its beginning. During the year under report, 3446 surgical cases were undertaken and all were successful. The kind of diseases cured included T.B. of the Lungs, Influenza, Malaria, and other fevers, Venereal Diseases, and Rheumatism. In addition to the successful working of the Allopathic Department on up-to-date lines, the Homoeopathic Department started a couple of years ago also did signal service. The latter is well equipped and is run on satisfactory lines. It is a long-felt and expressed desire that the institution is very much in need of a Laboratory section. The statement of receipts and payments makes it clear that the institution is in immediate need of funds for extending its service.

#### **The Ramakrishna Mission. Singapore.**

##### **Report for the year, 1939.**

This is the only branch of the Mission in the Federated Malaya States. Its activities fall under the following divisions: (1) Library and Reading Room: The former contained 713 books and the latter received 17 periodicals in all. (2) Prea-



ching: Regular religious classes and lectures were held on every day except on Mondays and Thursdays. (3) Educational: (a) Vivekananda Tamil Boys' School: Its strength was 137 and it was run by a staff of 5 teachers. The students are taught in Tamil, up to standard VII. The results in the Examinations were satisfactory. One student out of the four in Standard VII secured second rank. (b) Afternoon English School for Boys: The enrolment during the year was 94. Here the boys are taught English up to Standard V. (c) Saradamani Girls' School: The strength of the school was 136. It had a staff of 5 lady teachers. Though the results obtained in the annual Examinations were not very satisfactory, yet much had been gained as a result of this experiment for future improvement. (d) Saradamani Afternoon English Girls' School: The strength was 75. At present English is taught up to Standard IV. (e) Night Classes: Two Tamil classes and two English classes conducted for adults seemed to be successful.

The schools paid equal attention to the health of the boys and girls and also to the other aspects of education—religious, literary, and artistic. They celebrated Navaratri and the birthdays of the great teachers, including those of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. In order to extend the sphere of activities the

Management fervently appeals to the public for funds.

#### The Ramakrishna Mission, Delhi Branch. Report for the years, 1936-'38.

This Centre was started in 1927 and its activities fall under the following heads: (1) Religious preaching (2) Library and Reading Room, (3) Outdoor Dispensary, (4) Tuberculosis Clinic. The most outstanding event of this period was the celebration of the first Centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna in 1936—1937. The Library contained 936 books and the Reading Room obtained 23 papers in all. During the period under review 64,988 patients were treated in the Dispensary. The total attendance of patients during the three years, in the Tuberculosis Clinic was 34030. The Clinic proved a great success as is evident from the rapid extension of its work and the warm sympathy and encouragement received from visitors of high responsibility and status. In the year, 1938, as a token of the appreciation of its work, King George Thanksgiving (Anti-tuberculosis) Fund made a contribution of Rs. 1000, whereby it was able to secure the services of a Lady Health Visitor. And Her Excellency the Marchioness of Linlithgow graced the Clinic by a visit. The Asrama also undertook Flood Relief Work in 1938, in certain parts of Bengal.

# THE VEDANTA KESAR



VOLUME XXVII



NUMBER 3

JULY, 1940.

## HYMN TO THE DIVINE MOTHER

The following verses are a selection from the *Tripurasundariveda-padastava* of Sri Sankaracharya. As the name suggests, the last quarter of each verse of this hymn is a line from the Veda, and the entire hymn is strung to an exalted tune of devotional fervour and philosophic insight.—Ed.

पुंस्कोकिलकलकणकोमलालापशालिनि ।

मदरागं कुरु मे मातदुर्गतानि पराश्रुव ॥

O Mother having a voice that has the charm of deep, soft notes uttered by the male cuckoos, deign to confer on me every good fortune, warding off all difficulties (1).

अन्तेवासिभस्ति चेत् ते मुमुक्षा

वक्ष्ये बुक्तिं मुक्तसर्वेष्वपि सन् ।

सद्भयः साक्षात् सुन्दरीं कृतिरूपं

अज्ञाभक्तिध्यानयोगादवेहि ॥

O disciple, if you have a desire to attain liberation, I shall tell you the method: Give up all other interests, and know directly from, saintly preceptors, through unswerving faith, loving devotion, and unbroken meditation, the

Beautiful Lady whose nature is Pure Intelligence (2).

शान्तो दान्तो देशिकेन्द्रं प्रणम्य

तस्यादेशात् तारकं मन्त्रतत्त्वम् ।

जानीते चेदम्ब धन्यः समानं

नातः परं वेदितव्यं हि किञ्चित् ॥

Having practised tranquillity and self-control, and after betaking oneself to a great teacher with due obeisance, if one knows the truth of the sacred formula, instructed by him, O Mother, there is no peer to such a person in good fortune; for is there anything to be learned higher than that? (3).

त्वमेव कारणं कार्यं क्रिया ज्ञानं त्वमेव च ।

त्वामेव न विना किञ्चित् त्वयि सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

Thou art the cause and the effect and the activity that relates them. And verily Thou alone art True Knowledge. Apart from Thee nothing exists. Everything is founded in Thee (4).

पराममद्वीन्द्रसुते तवाङ्घ्रि-

सरोजयोरम्ब दक्षामि मूर्ध्ना ।

अलङ्कृतं वेदवधूशिरोभि-

र्धतो जतो भुवनानि विश्वा ॥

O Daughter of the Himalayas, O Mother, I place on my forehead the dust of Thy holy feet, which is respectfully worn as ornament on the crown of maiden who are none other than the Vedas, and from which all the worlds have sprung (5).

दुष्टान् दैत्यान् हन्तुकामां महर्षीन्  
शिष्टानन्यान् पातुकामां कराब्जैः ।  
अष्टामिस्त्वां सायुधैर्भासमानां  
दुर्गा देवी शरणमहं प्रपद्ये ॥

I take refuge in Thee, Mother Durga, who shines with eight hands, wielding weapons in order to destroy the wicked demons and protect the rest, the good—the great sages (6).

देवि सर्वानवद्याङ्गि त्वामनाहत्य ये क्रियाः ।  
कुर्वन्ति निष्फलास्तेषामदुग्धा इव धेनवः ॥

O Goddess of perfect form, the worship that is performed without paying Thee honour is as sterile as a barren cow (7).

भवानि तव पादाब्जनिर्जणपवित्रिताः ।  
भवामयप्रशान्त्यै त्वामपो याचामि मेषजम् ॥

O Mother, I pray for the water hallowed by the ablution of Thy feet as a medicine to heal the disease of the cycle of existence. (8).

नो वा यगैर्नैव पूर्तादिकृत्यैः  
नो वा जप्यैर्नो महद्भिस्तपोभिः ।  
नो वा योगैः क्लेशकृद्भिः सुमेधा  
निचाप्येमां शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति ॥

Surely not by offering sacrifices, not by altruistic deeds and the like, not by muttering sacred words, not by staggering asceticism, not even by fatiguing religious practices, O wise one, one

attains the transcendent beatitude, but by treasuring Her at heart (9).

प्रातः पाहि महाविधे मध्याह्ने तु मृदुप्रिये ।  
सायं पाहि जगद्वन्द्ये पुनर्नः पाहि विश्वतः ॥

Protect us, O Supreme Wisdom, at dawn. Protect us, O Spouse of Siva, at noon. Protect us, O Thou Who art worshipped by the world, at dusk. Protect us ever on all sides (10).

कर्णाकर्ण्य मे तत्त्वं या चिच्छक्तिरितिर्यते ।  
त्रिवेदामि मुमुक्षूणां सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥

Listen, O Ear, the final truth. I repeat it thrice. She who is proclaimed to be the Intelligence-Power is the Highest; She is the final Goal (11).

वाग्देवीति त्वां वदन्त्यम्ब केचित्  
लक्ष्मीर्गीरीत्येवमन्येऽप्युयाजति ।  
शश्वन् मानः प्रत्यगद्वैतरूपां  
शंसन्ति केचिन्निविदो जनाः ॥

O Mother, some designate Thee as the Vagdevi—Goddess of speech; others name Thee as Lakshmi—Goddess of Wealth, Beauty, and Grace; still others wish Thee to be known as Gauri. But people versed in the Vedas always speak of Thee, O Mother, as the non-dual immediate Self (12).

सलितेति सुधापूरमाधुरीचोरमम्बिके ।  
तव नामास्ति यत् तेन जिह्वा मे मधुमत्तमा ॥

My tongue, O Mother, has the utmost sweetness because it repeats Thy name which has robbed the entire sweetness of nectar (13).

कदम्बारुणमम्बाया रूपं चिन्तय चित्त मे ।  
मुञ्च पापीयसीं निष्ठां मा दृष्टः कस्यस्त्विदमम् ॥

O my mind, dwell upon the form of the Mother red in colour as the

Kādamba flower. Discharge sinful habits. Do not covet anybody's property (14).

दे रे चित त्वं वृथा शोकसिन्धौ

मज्जस्यन्तर्वचम्युपायं विमुक्त्यै ।

देव्याः पादौ पूजयेत्काङ्क्षरेण

तत्तेषां संप्रहेण ब्रवीम्योम् ॥

Look here, O mind, to no purpose you are drowning in the ocean of misery. I shall confide to you a method of escape. Worship the feet of Devi with the one syllable, I shall briefly state it to you; it is the sacred word Om (15).

तामेवाशं ब्रह्मविद्यामुपासे

मूर्तेर्वन्देः स्तूयमानां भवानीम् ।

हन्त स्वात्मत्वेन यां मुक्तिकां

मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोकौ जहाति ॥

I adore that Ancient Divine Wisdom who is Bhavani Herself—Who is praised by incarnated Vedas. Ah, by reflecting on Her as one's own Self the steadfast seeker after liberation transcends grief and exultation (16).

दरिद्रं मां विजानीहि सर्वज्ञासि यतः शिवे ।

दूरीकृत्याशु दुरितमयानां वर्धया रयिम् ॥

Remember that I am destitute; for, Thou, O auspicious Mother, art Omniscient. Banish my difficulties and then increase my wealth (17).

सन्तु विद्याः जगत्प्रसिद्धाः संसारभ्रमहेतवः ।

भजेऽहं त्वा मयो विद्वान् विद्यामृतमश्नुते ॥

In this world there are sciences which serve no purpose other than to bind one to the wheel of birth and death. Conscious of this, I worship Thee. He who knows

this attains immortality through emancipating wisdom (18).

मुखं वाचकतां चित्तं पामरं चापि दैवतम् ।

गृहाण पदमम्बायाः एतदालम्बनं परम् ॥

Give up this idle garrulity, O mind. And also turn away from low Gods. Hold on to the Mother's feet. There is no support superior to it (19).

का मे भीतिः का क्षतिः किं दुरापं

कामेशाङ्कोत्तुङ्गपथेऽङ्गसंस्थायम् ।

तत्त्वातीतामच्युतानन्ददार्ढ्यं

देवीमहं निर्वृतिं वन्दमानः ॥

Have I fear from anyone? Have I any lack? Is there anything beyond my reach? I am one who worships the true Deity Who confers unchanging Bliss—The Mother who is beyond the categories and who is seated on the couch of Siva's lap (20).

कुर्वे गवेषापचारानपागन्

यद्यथैव त्वत्पदाब्जं तथापि ।

मन्ये धन्ये देवि विद्यावलम्बं

मातेव पुत्रं विष्टतास्वेनम् ॥

Out of vanity, O Mother, even though I continue to commit unlimited offences, yet, O gracious Deity, I deem Thy feet alone as the source and support of wisdom. May Thee nourish me as a mother her child (21).

अविज्ञाय परां शक्तिमात्मभूतां महेश्वरीम् ।

अहो पतन्ति निरव्येष्टके चात्महनो जनाः ॥

Some who are bent upon self-destruction, alas, drop into hell regardless of the Supreme Power, the Divinity that is the self of all (22).

तव तत्त्वं विमृशतां प्रत्यगद्वैतलक्षणम् ।

चिदानन्दधनादन्यत्रेह नानास्ति किञ्चन ॥

Those who contemplate on Thy reality, the nature of which is the non-dual, innermost Self of all, do not perceive any multiplicity here apart from condensed Intelligence and Bliss (23).

त्वत्पादुकादुसन्धानप्राप्तसर्वात्मतादृशि ।

पूर्णाद्वृत्तितिल्यस्मिन् न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥

Effects of deeds do not stick on to one who has reached a state of all-inclusive Egoity, in consequence of seeing all as his own Self—a view produced by constant meditation on Thy feet (24).

सत्त्वानुग्रहनिभिन्नहृदयप्रान्धिरद्विजे ।

स्वात्मत्वेन जगन्मत्वा ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥

O Thou Daughter of the Mountain, he who has cut asunder the knots of the mind by Thy grace considers the whole world as his own Self, and hence bears no malice to anybody (25).

हस्ताम्भोजप्रोष्ठसन्ध्यामराभ्यां

श्रीव.णीभ्यां पार्श्वयोर्वीज्यमानाम् ।

श्रीसाम्राज्ञि त्वां सदा लोकयेयं

सदा सद्भिः सेव्यमानां निगूढाम् ॥

May I visualize Thee always, O Majestic Queen of the Universe, who, though unseen, is ever worshipped by good people and fanned by Lakshmi and Saraswati on both the sides with shining chowries in their hands (27).

त्वामेवाहं स्तौमि नित्यं प्रणौमि

श्रीविद्येशां वक्ष्यि सञ्चिन्तयामि ।

अथास्ते या विश्वमाता विराजो

हस्तुण्डरीकं विरभं विशुद्धम् ॥

I praise Thee alone every day, chant verses about Thee, speak about Thee, and duly meditate upon Thee—the Deity of Srividya, Mother of the Universe, Who dwells in the passionless, perfectly pure heart of the Cosmic Being (28).

यत्नैव यत्नैव मनो मदीयं

तत्नैव तत्नैव तव स्वरूपम् ।

यत्नैः यत्नैव शिरोमदीयं

तत्नैव तत्नैव पदद्वयं ते ॥

Wherever my mind be, may it meet Thy Form; and wherever my head be, may the two feet of Thine receive my prostrations (29).

## THE PRACTICE OF RELIGION

On Sunday, the twelfth of May, **Srimat Swami Madhavanandaji**, the General Secretary of the Order and Mission, gave a spiritual talk to a gathering of devotees at the Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore. The substance of his talk is reproduced in these paragraphs.—Ed.

THE practical aspect of religion is of supreme importance. In this work-a-day world we are all really interested in the practice of religion. A really thirsty man is not at all interested in a theoretical discussion about the properties of water or its qualities, but would try to get water and quench his thirst. To start with, in every devotee or aspirant some idea of religion will be present, and as he proceeds in practice that will become more clear and firm. We all know that life on earth is not a pleasure. Our everyday experience tells us that life is often full of misery. Religious life dawns with this recognition and the search for abiding things.

In man there are three urges. First of all there is the urge for existence or life. Everyone wants to live and nobody wants to die. The whole creation is mad after life. This desire to live long is inherent in every being. Secondly, there is the urge for knowledge. A child while going in the street with its father questions him 'Father, what is this? What is that?' Our endeavour in life is to gather more and more knowledge. Acquiring of knowledge is an integral part of life. Thirdly, there is the urge for happiness in life. We want to get the maximum of happiness out of the things of life, of course, according to our ideas. But,

however much ideas regarding happiness may vary, it is always happiness of one kind or other that man is struggling to get in some way or other. Now this urge for existence or for life, for knowledge, and for bliss, form the three cardinal facts of our life. They remain with us so long as we are human beings, and will continue as long as we live. Our whole endeavour is to get the maximum amount of knowledge and happiness in the best possible way. The real problem of religion is the discovery of this maximum.

Now one factor that is familiar to all of us in this world is the fact of death which is present before us. In spite of our best endeavours we cannot get rid of the idea that our health, wealth, beauty, and the rest, will part from us at the moment of death. A truly religious man is he who wants to go beyond death. By careful analysis of the scriptures, by association with holy men, and by our own experience—by innumerable means and avenues—we learn that nothing in this world is permanent. We are not content with earthly life. We try to get life, knowledge, and happiness of a permanent nature. That is the beginning of religious life. In course of time we realize that nothing of this side of God-realization can give us infinite life, infinite knowledge, and infinite happiness, which are the three requisites of our inner existence. God alone can satisfy our desire for full life, full knowledge, and full happiness.

Whenever we come in contact with great spiritual persons, we find that certain things are common to all of

them. They do not delineate the earthly things of fleeting nature, but portray in glowing colours what is beyond. Our Rishis have declared that if we want to get happiness, knowledge, and existence, which are infinite and permanent, we must go beyond the limits of the senses—beyond the things of the earth. This getting beyond the senses is an actual fact. Even in the present age saints and sages like Sri Ramakrishna have realized the Truth beyond the senses—call It by whatever name, Kali or Brahman or anything else. This is no phantom. God can be realized in this very life. So direct your energies towards the realization of that Infinite Being.

Of course, there are different approaches according to different temperaments. Views about God and standpoints adopted may differ; but they are on the surface, and fundamentally the differences merge in the same substance, God. God may be personal or impersonal. He may be Shiva, Krishna or Shakti; but all are the Supreme truth. Our duty as seekers after Truth should be to seek the common bases and proceed towards the goal, whatever may be the path along which we proceed—be it Karma, Jnana, Yoga, or Bhakti. Take up any Shashtra you like and read it carefully, you will find this advice given everywhere: Be as much spiritual as possible. Senses give us pleasure and knowledge; but they do not satisfy the mind permanently. So withdraw your mind from the senses and concentrate it on what is beyond, namely, Truth.

This, in other words, means that meditation should be practised. How to do it is the question. Sri Ramakrishna has given us a beautiful

advice in this connection: 'Meditate on God either in an obscure corner, or in the solitude of forests, or within the silent sanctuary of your own heart.' This advice is for three different types of people. For those who can find leisure to go to the forest, his advice is to practise meditation there as it is easier to practise it there than in the midst of the world full of distractions. Chemists know that they cannot weigh with a delicate balance in a place where there is breeze. Similarly one must think of God in the solitude of forest. A secluded corner of the house is advised for those who cannot go to the forest. If one cannot get even a corner of the house, if one cannot go away from company, then one is to shut oneself up in the corner of one's own mind, turn the mind inward, even in the midst of company.

Concentrate your mind on your own heart, try to think that the Lord is dwelling in your heart, and meditate upon Him. You will then surely find some solace, some peace. Similarly you should harmonize the different instructions of the Shastras. The advice given by all the Shastras and great men is: Meditate. Fix the mind on God; focus it on truths about God; on the definite aspect of God given by the Guru, i.e., on your Ishtam (Chosen Ideal). If not, find that aspect which appeals to you most, and meditate on it even if it be for a few minutes.

Every thought of ours leaves its influence on our minds, and thought grooves are formed in the brain by repeated thinking, like the ups and downs in a gramophone record. Already sense contacts have left impressions in our minds. By affinity these impressions produce like

thoughts. We have thought of certain things in the past with pleasure or repugnance. The sight of those objects naturally produce the same reactions in our mind. By thoughts we have become what we are and by thoughts we shall become what we want to be. The most potent form of trying to induce good thoughts in us is meditation. It helps us to remove wrong impressions. So meditation is necessary for the practice of religion.

At the beginning, meditation is difficult, because thoughts of God are entirely new to us. Meditation must be gradual like learning to play on a violin. Even playing on a violin is difficult and distasteful at first. By and by, by continuous struggle, one creates a taste for it, and then one cannot give it up. A person plays on the violin for his own pleasure and for that of others. So also in meditation one must create a taste and an interest for meditation; then one will find a joy in that, and finally perfection will come. Arjuna, when he was asked by Sri Krishna to control the mind, observed that 'it is like catching the wind'. But Sri Krishna gave only the time-old methods of Abhyasa (practice) and Vairagya (dispassion). By constant practice mind is controlled. Meditation must be attended with Vairagya.

If you want God truly, you must give up attachments that stand in the way of reaching God. Without such renunciation spiritual advancement is not possible. There are some who while submitting to the senses try to go beyond; their efforts become futile naturally. When the boat is anchored in water, there is no use of putting oars to drive it forward. Too often we delude ourselves by thinking that we want God, but really we

don't want Him. In one of the dramas of Girish Chandra Ghosh, a certain character is made to express 'I can't forget her'; to which a retort is given by the Guru: 'You can't forget her! Say, you don't want to forget her.' This is the secret. God knows the desires that are lurking in our hearts. So first it should be seen whether one's profession and actions correspond precisely, and then practise discrimination. Sincerity, in one word, is *the* Path. What made Sri Ramakrishna realize God in so short a span of time? It was his sincere and steadfast effort; with him there were no half-way measures. The mind acts as Guru when it is made pure and calm. We feel at moments that God alone is worth having and not the world. But we must make it permanent and not a passing phase. In other words, if we want God we must renounce all other things. If we are assiduous and persistent, God's help is guaranteed. Just as we approach God, God will approach us. If we go one step towards Him, he walks ten steps towards us! This is the great assurance given by Sri Ramakrishna.

God is infinite in His nature. If it were not so, no amount of our efforts would suffice for reaching Him. By His infinite grace we succeed in our endeavours. The children of our houses, while they are young, cannot speak well, they just utter 'la' 'la', and for that only the father will feel glad and respond. Similarly God gets satisfied with our little sincere efforts and responds to our call. He is all-compassionate and all-loving. He is immensely pleased with His little children, and knows the workings of their hearts, and responds to their needs much beyond their expect-



tations. Even a little sincere effort draws forth His grace in abundance. But that little effort we are unable to put forth!

Once Swami Vivekananda said to Swami Turiyananda, 'Is God like some vegetable that you can buy in exchange for something? Can you get God for a price?' No! Not at all! You must do severe Sadhana. Remember that the relation between Sadhana or spiritual practice and Siddhi or spiritual realization is not a Rule of Three. Our heart's best energy should be directed to Him. We must be prepared to sacrifice all our best for Him. Let us take an illustration of Sri Ramakrishna. The bird sitting on the mast of a ship in mid-ocean flies again and again in different directions to reach the shore; but ultimately it gets tired and comes back to the mast to rest there once for all. But it reaches land easily when the ship touches the port. Like that bird we must exert our utmost and feel that despite all our strivings we could not succeed. So Sadhanas are necessary to tire the wings, as it were, and the egoism in us should be completely shattered. God is pulling out the ego in us by playing a game of hide-and-seek. We have our ideas of propriety, of capacity; we feel we must do such and such a thing; we say, we can do it; we want to get God by our own efforts. Since we know that through experience and through the ego we can achieve many things, we try to get God too in that way. But all these efforts purify the mind, help to keep it in touch with God. So they are necessary. If you do not engage yourself in spiritual practices you can't have complete resignation. That comes only after having done

to the utmost one can do to achieve God. So when man finds the farthest limits of his endeavours as useless, he surrenders; that is real Prapatti<sup>1</sup> (resignation to the will of God with faith) which comes at the end of sincere Sadhanas.

The mother gives the child a few playthings, and so long as the child is playing, the mother goes on minding her own work. She does not attend to the child while it is at play or even crying in the usual way; but the moment—at the approach of some danger—it shrieks out terribly, the mother at once runs to it. She knows whether the cry is real or false and whether she should go or not. Similarly when our cry to God is earnest, then response comes. It means that you should put forth all your best energies to the attainment of God. Just as for passing an examination, you put forth your best energy, similarly for attaining God you must exert your utmost.

The sage, Patanjali, in the *Yoga-sutras* refers to three characteristics of Meditation: *Dirghakala Nairantarya Satkara*. *Dirghakala* means a great length of time; *Nairantarya* means continuous, unbroken. This implies that along with spiritual practice at stated hours the mind should be kept on God continuously at all time. It won't do to meditate on God regularly at a particular time; but some part of the mind should be on God always. Thirdly, *Satkara* or earnestness is needed. There should be nothing perfunctory; there should be whole-hearted devotion to what you do. Long, continuous, and sincere practice is necessary for success.

Therefore apply these three tests to the particular Sadhana. Make the realization of God your ultimate goal in

life. As a Hindu you must reach God in this very life. The highest quest of life requires all your best energies. Do not say that youth is for pleasure and that you may devote yourself to religion in your old age. In your old age, you won't be in a fit condition to do Sadhana; you will have no strength for it. Let there be earnest endeavour. Blame only yourself if you do not get what you want. Do not leave things for the future; then result never comes. The Upanishad says, 'What you gain here and now is your own.' So use your present opportunity and realize God. Even while working, lay emphasis on the spiritual side. Even a little faith, according to the *Gita*, will do much; even a little struggle protects us from great danger.

In science we hear of the hydrostatic paradox. When a small vessel is connected with a reservoir of water, water stands at the same level in both. Therefore, connect yourself with God, be sincere, do work for the sake of God. The great saint Ramaprasad says, 'I advise you to worship my Mother in whatever way you like. Use your hand for counting the Name of God, i.e., for doing Japam. While eating, think that you are offering food to your Ishtam, or the God within. Every sound is a Mantra of God, and so whenever you hear anything, think that you are hearing God's Name. In every human body God dwells; and so, whenever you walk, think that you are making a Pradakshina (circumambulation). See His form always with your eyes, and so on.' It is thus that you must spiritualize all your secular activities. Every man may do this in his daily acts.

Even in the midst of the world emphasize God. Never lower the ideal. Do your work in the world as if God has given tasks to you and is seeing you. When you can command solitude and leisure, turn your mind on God and repeat His Names. Even when you are physically tired and are lying down, think of God. Thoughts of God soothe the nerves, they calm your mind, and give you rest quickly. This is the secret. When you see God everywhere, no harm can befall you. Saints dwelling in the forest see tigers, but are not afraid of them. Rishis see God in the tiger and hence the tiger do not hurt them. The great saint Pavahari Baba, seeing a thief who entered his cave to steal something, running away for fear of being caught, said, 'Oh Lord, all these are Thine, I will carry them to Thee.' So saying he took them all and placed before the thief. This saint saw God in the thief; and when Swami Vivekananda met the same thief later, he had been transformed into a saint. Sri Ramakrishna would often see the Divine Mother in the street woman and enter into Samadhi. A lady wearing a blue cloth reminded him of Sita. When he saw a group of drunkards, he got a spiritual intoxication. Such was the fruit of his Sadhana.

God alone is real. We are surrounded by God within and without, as a pitcher immersed in the sea is surrounded by water. Try to feel the Lord as much as you can. Don't waste time in discussion about God, but try to slake your thirst for God. Swami Ramakrishnananda told me, 'Desire God, just like a man down under water panting for air'. You must want God really. If you desire things other than God, tell your mind

what you really want and do not delude yourself. If your desires involve too much of labour and energy, don't fulfil them; but if they are small desires and do not involve much loss, then enjoy them and be free. Love God truly and try to reach Him. Choose your own mode of practice and struggle with the conviction that God will help you. Pray to the Lord and have real anguish for God. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'If you earnestly pray, God is sure to bless you'; and no untruth ever fell from his lips. He came to teach. He said: 'If you want God really, you will get Him all the sooner'. It takes very little

time for the mustard seed on a cow's horn to fall down; and indeed realization is possible so soon if our endeavour is really earnest. Cultivate the positive aspect. Look after yourselves as the children of the Lord. Already the relation is there, remember. Let the thought of God be like a tooth-ache unintermittent and ever-recurring. It is really possible for us to realize God in this very life. Permit me to say that my own humble experience and my contact with the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna have given me this assurance.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

## THE BHAGAVATA MOVEMENT IN THE MAHARASHTRA

In the following article Professor S. V. Dandekar, M.A., of the R. R. College, Bombay, gives a critical sketch of the Devotional School of the Maharashtra Country which has a development of over fifteen centuries, sustained through the social and literary influences of a succession of saintly bards of remarkable mystical attainments. This was one of the papers submitted before the Philosophical Congress held at Allahabad last year.—Ed.

### INTRODUCTION

BHAGAVATISM is a living creed in Maharashtra. More than ten lakhs of people profess this religion. A detailed and comprehensive history of this Vaishnavite Movement yet remains to be written. A very brief reference to the views of only two—Namdev and Tukaram—has been

made by Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar in his *Vaishnavism, Sairism and Minor Religious Systems*. Jnanadev, the great poet-saint and scholar of Alandi, the Coryphaeus of these Maharashtrian bards, has been simply named. Ekanath, the great Sanskrit Scholar and a voluminous writer who has influenced even Ramadas, has not been even mentioned. With all the great reverence that one possesses for the late scholar it must be said that he had not tried to fathom the depths of this Movement which was a living force in his own Province. His conclusions in regard to these two whom he has mentioned also need revision. If this is true of our own native scholar, and himself a man of devotion, it is not strange that this Movement as a whole has received but scant recognition from Non-Maharashtrians who have attempted

to write about the Bhagavata Movement in Maharashtra. Barth, the great Orientalist, considers this Movement so insignificant that to mention it after the discussion of Kabir Panthis, Sikhs, etc. is only to have added names to names, a very useless proceeding. Probably Barth forgot that Namdev's Abhangas have been included in the sacred Granth Sahib of the Sikhs, and even now crowds of Sikhs gather at Ghuman village in the Punjab to show their respect to Namadev. Even Carpenter's *Theism in Mediaeval India* makes but a passing reference to this Movement. Raychaudhari's *Early History of the Vaishnava Sect* stops with Ramanuja. The only attempt so far made on a larger scale is by Prof. R. D. Ranade in his *Mysticism in Maharashtra*. But in this book he has followed an analytical method and made the four great typical Mystics speak for themselves. The writer of the present article therefore believes that a detailed and comprehensive history of this Bhagavata Movement dealing with its origin, development, influences, general characteristics, philosophical tenets, and its comparison with similar Movements in the North and South is a desideratum. Hence in this paper an attempt is being made to discuss some of the important points connected with the comprehensive history of this Movement.

#### MEANING OF THE TERM BHAGAVATA

Bhagavata movement in Maharashtra is quite distinct in its origin and spirit from Bhagavatism criticised by Sankara in his commentary on the *Vyasa Sūtras* (II: iii, 42-45). That the Bhagavatas mentioned therein are frank dualists is seen from their ac-

ceptance of Chaturvyuha conception. Their views have influenced Ramanuja, the great Vaishnavite advocate of Qualified Monism. The Bhagavata Movement in Maharashtra has been throughout Monistic, and therefore deserves to be very carefully studied. Excepting Vallabha all the Acharyas who were dissatisfied with the Nirguna Brahma of Sankara and advocated the existence of a Personal God were dualists. Maharashtra Bhagavatas, on the other hand, were all of them Monists. Theirs is an attempt to combine spiritualistic Monism with devotion to the Personal God. Jnanadev, Ekanath, Namadev, Tukaram, and Ramadas were all of them great devotees and yet advocated spiritualistic Monism.

The Movement is called Bhagavata not because it followed the Old Bhagavata doctrine, but because it centred round Vithoba (a boy form of Krishna) and Rama—both incarnations of Vishnu—who is called Bhagavan. There appears to be also another explanation for this name. These Bhagavatas accepted the authority of *Srimad Bhagavata* along with the Vedas and the *Bhagavad Gita* and preached and practised the form of devotion which has been advocated in the *Bhagavata*. They called themselves as Bhagavatas even when they adored Vishnu, because they were not extremists like the Shri Vaishnavites, the followers of Ramanuja. Keeping before their mind the fact that God is one though sages call Him variously, they tolerated the worship of God under different forms. God Vithoba is looked upon as an emblem of the identity of Hari and Hara. Hence to distinguish themselves from the

bigoted, extremist Vaishnavas, these men called themselves Bhagavatas.

#### HISTORY

The Bhagavata Movement is nearly 1,500 years old. That it existed long before Jnanadev (who flourished about 1260 A.D.) is clear from the Abhangas of Namdev and the excavations at Alandi (the place of Jnanadev's 'Samadhi'). The excavations of Alandi discovered a 'Samadhi' bearing a date before Jnanadev, having the idols of Vithal and Rukmini carved behind it. This clearly shows that the Vithal worship must have been in vogue long before Jnanadev so that it could get this sanctity to be carved on the 'Samadhi' of a Sannyasin. But there is a work called *Malutaran* giving the history of the God Vithoba of Pandharpur, which traces this worship to the beginnings of Salivahan-saka.

In Maharashtra the first known devotee of this God was Pundalik to whom, the tradition states, God appeared in this form. But nothing is known about the date of this great devotee. Very probably the earliest history of this temple will be found in Kanarese and Tamil literature.

Though the Movement dates about 300 A.D., the creative period in its history was the period of four hundred years starting with the composition of *Jnanesvari*. It was Jnanadev, the author of *Jnanesvari*, that first introduced a great organization amongst these Bhagavatas. In his time were born, in almost all the castes, Namadev (tailor), Savta (a gardener), Chokha (a Mahar), Gora (a potter), Parisa Bhagvata (Brahman), Nurahari Sonar (a gold smith), etc.—all very brilliant devo-

tees. Even his (Jnanadev's) brothers and sister—Nivrittinath, Sopanadev, and Muktabai were ardent devotees of God Vithal.

The history of this Movement falls under the following divisions:

1. Period prior to Jnanadev: Pundalik.
2. Period of Jnanadev and Namdev.
3. Period of Bhanudas and Ekanath.

To the third period belong, along with Bhanudas and Ekanath, Janardan, Vitha Renukanandan, Jani Janardan, Rama Janardan, Premadas, Mahavipradas, Narsimha, Viravar, and Vishnudasnama.

4. Period of Tukaram and Ramdas.

5. Post-Tukaram and post-Ramdas periods.

Post-Tukaram period has Niloba, Bahinabai, Mallapa (Lingayat) and Prahlada-buva Badve.

Post-Ramdas—Anandmurti, Rangnath, Kalyan, Girdhar, Keshavevami, Venabai, Akkabai, etc.

#### SUSPECTED OUTSIDE INFLUENCES

Views ruled out of Court.

(a) Late Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar says, 'Like Vaishnavism of the disciples of Ramananda, it had no learned or Sanskrit-knowing promulgators, but its prophets were Sudras who, however, had the true religious instinct and possessed a clear spiritual insight. Such were Namadev and Tukaram.'

This is wrong. That the Movement has not produced grammarians and logicians is true. But to say that it had no Sanskrit-knowing promulgators is to shut one's eyes to the works of Jnanesvar, Ekanath, Ramadas, Sivakalyan, and Prahlada-buva Badve. Ekanath's commentary on *Bhaga-*

*vata*, completed at Benares, shows what a proficiency he had in Sanskrit.

(b) An attempt has been made by some missionaries to trace the origin of Theism in this Movement to Christian influences. But Carpenter himself says: 'The Dominican Friar Jordances, writing of his experiences on the West Coast between 1321 and 1330, found only a scattered people, one here and another there, who call themselves Christians, but are not so, nor have they Baptism, nor do they know anything else about the faith. Nay, they believe St. Thomas the Great to be Christ'. If this was the state on the West Coast itself, it could be easily seen that the Christian influence must not have reached the interior at all by the time this Movement was in its vigorous activity.

(c) That the Bhagavatas were largely influenced by the Buddhistic Movement is the contention of some. According to the advocates of this view the facts that these Philosophers advocated that (i) the world was transient; (ii) that it was full of suffering; (iii) and that the non-killing of animals was to be the sum of all virtues—are all highly Buddhistic conceptions which lend sufficient support to the point. But it is easy to refute an argument of this type. That the world is a continuously changing process and that therefore a man should, instead of getting attached to the fleeting sensuous objects which it affords, make all efforts to find an unchanging goal are conceptions to be found in the Upanishads themselves. Moreover these men have advocated a theory of permanent self and of Personal God, which are ab-

solutely foreign to Buddhistic doctrine in any form.

(d) It has been said that Ramanuja influenced this Movement through Ramananda. This also is not correct. The grounds for such a view are a similarity between Jnanadev's and Ramanuja's attack on Maya and the doctrine of Bhakti preached by both. But this similarity is only in appearance.

If Ramanuja considers that Atman is always Savikalpa, Jnanadev and other thinkers of this Movement maintain that self is both Savikalpa and Nirvikalpa. Jnanadev would not assert Maya because it appeared to him to lessen the glory of the nature of the Atman. Atman is self-effulgent. Ramanuja's reasons are different.

Ramanuja advocates the co-ordination of Jnana (spiritual wisdom) and scripture-ordained activity, while these philosophers advocate that Release is possible only through Jnana, *i.e.*, the experience of the identity of the finite self with the Universal Self.

Ramanuja and then Madhva (his influence is especially noticeable on Ramadas) might have influenced this Movement in some non-essentials. But so far as the essentials are concerned they are absolutely unconnected growths.

(e) There is an idea recently expressed that Sufism must have influenced this Movement in its later growth. An excellent book by Prof. Kshitimohan Sen of Santiniketan points out the influence of the Sufis on Vaishnavite Movements. But so far as Maharashtra is concerned, in its early stages there was absolutely no connection between Sufism and this Movement. This is clear from

Jnanadev's statement in *Jñanesvari* that the Tamasik knowledge and manners resulting therefrom are to be found in the (distant) mountainous tracts of Mleccha religion. If Mahomedanism influenced later on, it did it only in the externals. In Ekanath and Tukaram we find various passages referring to Mahomedan customs. But they do not show that the views of these devotees were determined by Sufi philosophy.

(f) As to Chaitanya Movement in Bengal and Maharashtra, a reference may be made to the paper read by the present writer before the Philosophic Conference held at Poona in 1933—34.

#### PRINCIPAL INFLUENCES

The Philosophers of this school have been largely influenced by the Upanishadic philosophy of Atman. This will be evident from the discussion of the philosophical tenets of this Movement in the next section.

The *Bhagavadgita* has been commented upon by Jnanadev. This Marathi commentary has served as a gospel to millions of people in Maharashtra. It is difficult to measure the influence this work has exercised over the succeeding generations of thinkers in Maharashtra.

The eleventh Skandha of *Shrimad-bhagavata* has been commented upon by Ekanath in Marathi. The influence of this work is also very large.

Along with these, Saints Gorakhnath and Gahininath have influenced this Movement in various aspects: The Yogic tendencies in the early philosophers, Krishna Bhakti, liberal dissemination of spiritual knowledge amongst men and women of all castes and creeds, and composition in

the vernacular, all may be attributed to that source.

Amongst the systematizers no one has exercised a greater influence than Sankaracharya. This also will be evident from the perusal of the next section.

#### PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINES

Coming to the philosophical doctrines, it must be said at the outset that it is difficult to put in a nutshell the metaphysical, ethical, cosmological, and mystical doctrines of this school. Some of these writers have put forth their views with such originality and with such use of imagination that a comprehensive statement of each would require a volume. In order, however, to point out the metaphysical position of this school, the present writer will first give in general the metaphysical conceptions and deal principally with the concept of the Atman as treated by these writers.

Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar was wrong when he maintained that Tukaram and others attacked spiritual monism. All these, from Jnanadev to Ramdas, were spiritual monists. And their spiritual monism was based on the ideas they obtained from the Upanishads. Like the Upanishads these philosophers describe Brahman or Ultimate Reality in two forms—Cosmic and Acosmic. But generally they are inclined towards giving importance to the cosmic aspect. That explains the attitude of these writers towards Maya. (Refer: Jnanadev's *Amritanubhava*, Ekanath's *Swatma-sukha* and Tukaram's *Hastamalaka*). They have a tendency to rise above Maya and advocate Advaita without Maya. This is, however, not to be confounded with Vallabha's Pure

Monism. Vallabha believes in Goloka and Rasakrida. Ekanath considers Vaikuntha itself as part of appearance.

Nor is their doctrine to be confounded with Ramanuja's, though it is true that Ramanuja, like these, criticizes Maya. Ramanuja, however, advocates the doctrine of Tatvatraya while the Maharashtrian Saints advocate absolute monism.

Though these writers do not accept the Maya of Sankara, yet they are idealists. One can fully see in their writings the characteristics of idealism which Dr. Das Gupta has given in his history of *India Idealism*.

Just to point out how this school stands related to Sankara and Ramanuja, we may briefly put forth its doctrine of Self.

These certainly disapprove of the concepts of the Self given by Charvaka Materialism, by Nihilism, and by Buddhistic Psychological idealism. The school believes that the Self is one, permanent, and is of the nature of consciousness. In his commentary on the Major Text *Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma* of the *Taittiriyaopaniṣad* Sankara says that Jnana conceived here can be a duality and that the true nature of self is mere awareness.

Ramanuja on the other hand maintains that objectless knowledge is impossible.

Sankara seems to assume Maya to explain how the self, which is merely of the nature of awareness, appears to manifest itself in subject-object relation. The philosophers of this school maintain the assumption of Maya to be a gratuitous hypothesis. Like the jewel Atman is a self-effulgent reality. It is Its very nature to manifest Itself in this manner.

Subject-object relation is its appearance or manifestation. But even when It so manifests Itself, manifestation being spontaneous and part of its very nature, no change has really taken place in the Atman. The two aspects are only our ways of looking at the same entity.

Like all spiritual Monists this school is also Mystical. Its speciality, even here, is that it considers God to be both Impersonal and Personal. Very naturally therefore the members of this school very sincerely urge the necessity of Self-realization. It is maintained that this is possible with the help of a Guru who initiates a devout and sincere seeker into the mystic knowledge, and thus the seeker is saved. An important point in this connection is that the school maintains that God, pleased with the devotion of the seeker, manifests himself before the devotee in the form of Guru and illumines him. And hence great stress is laid on prayers and annual visits to the temple of the Ishita Devata. Divine worship consists of meditation, chanting divine Name, worship of Saguna or Personal God, and the like.

The school also urges that purity of heart is a *sine qua non* of spiritual life. It also advocates strict adherence to the injunctions of the Shastras so far as conduct of life is concerned.

#### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Synthetic outlook: bringing under its banner saints belonging to different mystical creeds: Nath (Jnanadev) Chaitanya (Tukaram), Prakash, Narayan (Datta Ekanath). Swaroop.

2. Liberal: Catering for men and women of all castes and creeds.



3. Writings in Vernacular: As Locke, Berkely, and Hume are literary giants, similarly Jnanadev, Ekanath, and Tukaram are literary giants popularising religious principles through Vernaculars.

4. Saguna Bhakti—A major part of the Movement is centred round God Vithoba; the remaining round Rama.

5. Way: Kirtan and Repeating of God's name.

6. None of the leaders of the Movement had formally renounced the world, i.e., had not entered the Sannyasa Order. Yet they were men of the greatest renunciation. In the case of every one of them it can be said that he had forsaken all to follow God.

7. Acceptance of the authority of the Vedas.

8. Annual pilgrimages: a very important and effective method of collecting devotees from different parts of the country and bringing

into close relation men belonging to different strata of society. Thus the Bhagavatas making an annual pilgrimage to Pandharpur are called Warkaris.

#### ITS RELATION TO OTHER VAISHNAVA MOVEMENTS

1. This is synthetic in its outlook and allows worship of different deities.

2. This Movement is, as Dr. Bhandarkar says, more sober and purer than that of Vallabha. Emotionalism and erotism have not found place in it.

3. It does not advocate extremes.

4. It continues to lay stress on the essentials.

It is these characteristics which explain to us why it has continued to have a hold on Maharashtra, whose people are temperamentally inclined towards compromise.

S. V. DANDEKAR

## SRI CHAITANYA

The following realistic account of Sri Chaitanya is by **Swami Prabhavananda**, the Head of the Vedanta Centre, Hollywood, U.S.A., and forms a section of his projected work on Indian Religion and Philosophy, the first part of which has already appeared in India and very well received by the learned and the Press.—Ed.

IN Sri Chaitanya is to be found the culmination and fulfilment of the philosophy and the religion of love. Vaishnavism, which is the philosophical expression of the ideal of love

for God, through him ushered in a new era in the cultural life of Bengal. Some one has truly said: 'It has found exquisite expression in lyrical poetry and music in a richly emotional school of devotional hymns which has been a peculiar contribution of Bengal. Every Bengali has in his blood a liberal dose of this sweet religion of love as a cultural inheritance.'

Even more than his philosophy, it is Sri Chaitanya's pure and gentle character, his ecstatic love for God, full of sweetness and loving-kindness,

that has ruled, and still does rule, the hearts of the people of Bengal. He knew no distinction of caste or creed in his overflowing love for God and man; all men, whether they were sinners or saints, were to him but creatures of God, and his heart overflowed with kindness and sympathy for the lowly, the suffering, and the destitute. So his very name excites genuine spiritual emotions in the hearts of those who know of him. His followers see in him Krishna re-born in flesh.

Sri Chaitanya was born in the year 1485 at Navadvip, at that time a large city in Bengal and the seat of Sanskrit learning, particularly of grammar and logic. His parents lost their first eight children, all of them daughters, in infancy, and the ninth, a boy, named Viswarupa, at an early age entered a monastery in Southern India. Sri Chaitanya was the youngest son. He was given the name Visvambhar, nicknamed Nimai. He was also called Gaur or Gauranga (Fair-complexioned) because of the exquisite beauty of his person. The name Sri Krishna Chaitanya he received after his acceptance in the Order of monks.

As a small baby he was afflicted with prolonged fits of weeping, the only remedy for which his mother found to be the chanting of the name Hari (God). As a boy, he was full of mischief, in teasing others and playing pranks.

He lost his father when he was eleven years old. It was then that the boy seriously bent himself to mastering his studies in literature and grammar and other branches of knowledge. He became the pupil of the well-known teacher of Sanskrit learning, Vasudeva Sarvabhauma, the

famous founder of Neo-Logic, in conjunction with his brilliant pupil, Raghunath.

An interesting story is told of the relation between Raghunath and the young Chaitanya. The former, a fellow-student, being at work upon his famous treatise on logic, learned that Chaitanya was writing a book of the same character. Asking his friend to read a few pages to him, he grew dispirited. 'I cherished a hope,' he replied to question from Chaitanya, 'of leaving a name behind me, but I realize that my work will not be read if yours is given to the public.' To this Chaitanya replied, 'This trivial matter must not disturb you. I will see that your work is recognized.' Thereupon he threw his own manuscript into the Ganges.

Though he had not yet completed his education at sixteen, he opened a school of his own at Navadvip, and in that city he gained fame as one of the greatest teachers of grammar and logic of his time, and hundreds of students flocked to him. During this period of his life he wrote a book on Sanskrit grammar which was widely used. And in Sanskrit learning he proved to be an unrivalled debater.

At the age of twenty-two or twenty-three, he departed upon a pilgrimage to Gaya, the site of a famous temple of Vishnu. It was at Gaya that Buddha, centuries before, sat under the Bodhi tree in meditation and attained illumination. And here the Young Sri Chaitanya, then known as Nimai Pandit, while worshipping at the feet of Vishnu, received a sudden illumination that enveloped his whole being. Tears rolled down his cheek and he lost himself in ecstasy. Amongst the pilgrims was

a monk, Isvar Puri, a Sannyasin of the Order of Sankara, who had met Chaitanya before and knew him for a great scholar. Now he recognized in him a great devotee as he witnessed his ecstatic condition. Chaitanya asked for blessing at the hands of Isvar Puri, who then initiated him into the worship of Krishna.

Nimai returned to Navadvip a changed man. The unrivalled scholastic debater, the grammarian, the logician, now disappeared. Instead, there presented itself before men a serene, exalted person, continually chanting 'Krishna, Krishna'. His former students gathered about him as was their custom, but he could no longer teach them. 'Brothers', he cried, 'I can no longer give you lessons. Whenever I attempt to explain anything to you, I see before me the little boy Krishna, playing upon his flute. You had better seek some other teacher.' Thereupon he sang a *kirtan*, which has come down to this day and is sung by the Vaishnavas of Bengal.<sup>1</sup>

Now there gathered round the master devotees who would meet together and dance in ecstatic joy. So did Sri Chaitanya become a great spiritual force in the city of Navadvip, and the lives of many unbelievers were transformed by the touch of this

God-intoxicated man. Some of his disciples in later years played an important part in preaching this message of love and giving peace and consolation to many a hungry soul.

At the age of twenty-five, two years after his conversion at Gaya, Sri Chaitanya was seized by a burning desire for renunciation. Swami Durga Chaitanya Bharati, a follower of Sri Chaitanya and his biographer, writes of this: 'The story of Gauranga's renunciation has few parallels in history. The heart-rending story of his renunciation, when he left his aged mother, loving young wife, and all Navadvip bewailing his separation, soon spread in all directions and moved the people in a way that nothing else did before in Bengal. This story has since been carried to the furthest corners of the country through poems, songs, ballads, dramas, and discourses, and yet even after these four-hundred-and-fourty-four years it has not lost in the least in its original pathos. There is no man or woman, young or old, who even to this day hearing of Gauranga's renunciation is not moved to tears.'

He then took monastic vows at the hands of Kesava Bharati, a follower of the Order of Sankara. To Kesava Bharati he related how in a dream he had received the *Mahavakya*—the sacred truth, *Tat tvam asi* (Thou art That)—as revealed to the seers of the Upanishads and the great saint and philosopher Sankara and accepted as containing the very essence of ultimate truth. Kesava Bharati in initiating Gauranga into the mysteries of the life of a monk, also initiated into this same *Mahavakya*.

Whatever of philosophy may have been codified by his disciples into a system, this great saint discovered an

<sup>1</sup> The *kirtan*, which is composed of the many names of Krishna together with his various attributes and was invented by Chaitanya, is sung to the accompaniment of certain musical instruments. The devotees join in the singing and dance in ecstatic joy. The first chant composed by Sri Chaitanya as he dismissed his school, runs thus: 'Hari Haraya nama, Krishna Yadava nama; Gopala, Govinda Rama, Sri Madhusudana.' ('Unto Him we salute.....' to the various names given to Krishna.)

essential harmony between Love and Knowledge. His biographers tell us that he possessed a dual personality. On the one hand, while he was in *samadhi*, having lost consciousness of the outer world and all sense of *me* and *mine*, he taught men that he was one with God; on the other, upon his return to normal consciousness, though he remained a lover of God, he could not bear the thought he was one with God.

In the normal state of consciousness he desired 'to taste the sweetness of sugar and not to become sugar'. Sri Ramakrishna has explained this attitude by remarking that like an elephant he had two sets of teeth, one with which to chew his food, the other with which to defend himself from outside obstacles. That is, Sri Chaitanya moved in two states of consciousness. While in the normal state, he was a dualist: he was the lover of God, and God was the Beloved. In *Samadhi*, however, he realized the truth of non-dualism, the lover and the Beloved became one. To the outside world and for the mass of men, he preached the ideal of love and the philosophy of dualism; and to the chosen few he preached the highest truth, which he dared not reveal to all men, who are not prepared to receive it, the supreme truth of non-dualism.

It is interesting to note in this connection that Sri Chaitanya, though he did not accept Sankara's doctrine of *Maya*, nowhere denounced Sankara as did most of the philosophers who came before the promulgation of the doctrine of love. On the contrary, it is recorded by the disciples of Chaitanya that their master very plainly stated that Sankara wrote his

commentary<sup>2</sup> and expounded his philosophy by direct command of God.

After his initiation into the monastic Order he set out for Puri, the well-known place of pilgrimage. There he resided for many years, with occasional departures for preaching or teaching. At one time he toured Southern India, visiting and worshipping in many of the temples without prejudice against other forms or aspects of the one Godhead. He also paid a visit to Brindavan, the holy seat of the Vaishnavas, where Krishna had engaged in his divine play with the shepherds and shepherdesses. The present Brindavan owes much to Sri Chaitanya and his disciples who rescued the holy place from oblivion.

His last days were spent in Puri. Here his overmastering, consuming love for God literally flooded the country round about. In the Temple of Puri his influence continues to be felt.

During most of the last twelve years of his life at Puri, Chaitanya lived in *Samadhi* and in the state midway between *Samadhi* and normal consciousness. In these states, he was like a mad lover of Krishna, sometimes enjoying the sweetness of union with Krishna, and again suffering the pangs of separation from Him, and these pangs were also sweet.

<sup>2</sup> Sri Chaitanya did not comment on the *Brahma Sutras* as did his predecessors. Once he remarked that the *Bhagavata Purana* is the best commentary on the *Brahma Sutras*. Baladeva Vidyabhushana, one of his followers, however, wrote a commentary, called *Govinda Bhashya*, in which he supported the Chaitanya philosophy.

The passing away of Sri Chaitanya is shrouded in mystery, his biographers giving no certain account of it. Most of them, however, do record the fact that he entered a temple and came out no more, simply disappear-

ing at the age of forty-eight. So there exists the belief that in the image of God in the Temple Chaitanya lives for eternity.<sup>3</sup>

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

<sup>3</sup> The Temple of Puri is dedicated to Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe. In popular American literature we find the phrase, 'car of Jagannath' (Juggernaut), which has come to mean that which treads on people and crushes them. Christian Missionaries at one time spread the false report that Hindu devotees lie in the path of the car waiting to be killed. There could be nothing more absurd than this cock-and-bull story. Accidents, it is true, may have occurred as the crowds eager to be blessed by a touch of the car pressed too close and some may have fallen and been crushed in consequence, but that they committed suicide in their mad ecstasy is a pure fabrication of the ignorant. Certainly in the entire history of this car of Jagannath, not so many have lost their lives by accident as today are killed in one year joy-riding in automobiles in one city in America.

One other matter may be noted at this point. The other day a friend asked me about the 'Black Pagoda in Puri'. For, I

am informed this is the name given to this holy temple of God by the misinformed in the enlightened West. After a good deal of thought, I discovered the reason for this name. On the outside of the temple are carved sensual pictures. Why should such carvings adorn the body of a temple of God? If we will try to understand what a temple to God really is, we should see nothing disgusting in these pictures. Each human body is a Temple of God, and the Temple of stone and marble symbolises just that. And in this temple of the human body, if man merely looks outward, he sees only sensual images; but let him go within, he will see in the shrine of his own heart the image of God. So this temple of Jagannath proclaims in no uncertain terms that if one looks at the universe merely externally, one will find only sensuality and sensual orgies. Let him, however, turn away his outer gaze and look within, and he will find the God of gods, reigning supreme, the source of joy and beauty and love.

## TRANS-CONCEPTUAL CHARACTER OF REALITY

Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar, M.A., Ph.D., is the author of *Comparative Studies in the Vedanta, System of Vedantic Thought and Culture, Mysticism in the Bhagavadgita, Hindu Mysticism According to the Upanishads, Eastern Lights*, and other thoughtful works. A few years ago he visited the important centres of learning in Europe, on invitation, to interpret the cultural ideals of India. This is the second instalment of a series of his articles on the

Mysticism of the Tantras that will be appearing in *The Vedanta Kesari*.—Ed.

In Indian thought, specially in the Absolute Vedanta and in the Tantras,—the ultimate reality is conceived as supra-logical. It is beyond the grasp of thought, and when thought thinks about it, it creates antinomies and contradictions. Thought thinks in relations, but the basic reality is beyond re-

lations. It is non-relational. The usual attempt of characterizing the ultimate existence as being-becoming, differentiating and then synthesizing them in a wider concept, is an intellectual process which the Tantras do not countenance. It is not possible to think of it as static or dynamic, though we are in the habit of usually doing so. The Tantras emphasize their integralness and characterize the reality as 'noumenal acting'. Activity is not a mere category or concept, but refers to the transcendent creativity of the fontal Power.

It is not the unconscious will of the German metaphysics. It is not the transcendent subjectivity of the super-conscious. This transcendent activity is not internally determined, and hence its expression is not controlled by logic. It is spontaneous. The transcendent activity is not a category of *thought-determination*; hence it is left free and indeterminate in its being and expression. Spirit is spontaneous activity. The divine consciring in the world process starts from it, but it is difficult to determine its nature and method, for the whole process is at its root free and non-determinate. Divine consciring is not regulated by thought-forms, nor is its movement controlled by final ends. It is spontaneous in its movements and reason plays its part when it is objectified in the realm of ideas. But the essence and nature of the consciring proceeds far beyond that. The world of ideas and concepts are true in a definite sphere, in the sphere of mentation, but reality exceeds that and conscires in its own indeterminate way.

It is customary to characterize the basic reality as being-becoming. The initial situation is that which exists

antecedent to the phase of development. The being-becoming cannot be conceived separately, for it is ultimate. When intellect thinks, it thinks them separately. It is the limitation of intellect. Becoming implies creativity, movement, world-rhythm, violation, and re-establishment of equilibrium; becoming understood in itself contrasts with being as 'the metaphysical fall' from the poise and integrity of Being. It is indeed possible to appraise the stages of becoming, and to determine the varied aspects of it in its cosmic consciring. But this is not satisfactory as an enquiry into the whole of reality. The integral reality is being-becoming; no distinction can be drawn between them, though there are phases of becoming, creative, conservative, additive, destructive. It has also a phase of gravitating towards the centre and enjoying a poise in being, before the time is ripe for another cycle of creative expression.

The supra-conceptual creativity, or becoming, is the primordial reality. This affirmation is almost identical with the affirmation of Whitehead. Still there is a distinction. In Whitehead the primordial reality acquires definiteness and rises into organism which represents a higher degree of reality. To Whitehead actuality is higher than potentiality, for there it gets its definite concrescence. Knowledge to him has always a definite meaning in a definite setting; when there is the lack of this definiteness and concrescence, nothing is left behind but a bare potentiality—an indefinite consciring with no cosmic history or cosmic concrescence. Naturally to Whitehead actuality as creativity is a higher degree of

reality. The process of consciring is more real in the sense that it introduces definiteness, richness, in place of a bare potentiality. The meta-physical fall is to him more interesting, in as much it is indispensable to creative advance. Nature 'is the locus of organism in the process of development. The so-called locus of Whitehead is a poem in which art, transcending anything to which we aspire, is displayed on the cosmic scale'. This art is involved in original creativity. There is no end of the creative concrescence. In the Tantras, there is the inverted movement towards the primordial creativeness and the original equilibrium. There is a poise beyond the creative rhythm, a lull in becoming. There is really an ascent along with a descent. This ascent is bent upon breaking the limitations of concepts and grasping the Trans-conceptual creativity and its poise in its locus. Consciousness is to be freed from the limitations of concentration in subjects, from the limitations of creativity on the canvas of space and the loom of time; the corner-stone of existence does not suffer the accidents of a definite and evanescent expression. The creative process is the process of concentration of the original becoming and its emergence into a definite order of cosmic consciring. The initial situation is lost sight of in its exhibition. It is free from the subjective reference in knowledge and activity. Actuality represents potentiality in its concrete formation, but is not necessarily a higher phase of existence. Reality has no degrees. The greater universes are settings in the process of the emergence and creativity. Creativity by its effectiveness appear as

dynamically more concrete and real; the concreteness and the effectiveness are not necessarily the test of reality, it is true of variation or change, but not of the dimensionless Existence. The conception of creative rhythm has its charm but it ignores the wideness of being. The Tantras evaluate reality as creative movement becoming more and more concrete in emergence, but the creativity is linked up with the wideness of unfettered and unconcentrated being. There is the cyclic movement from, and its withdrawal into, the focus of being. The dynamic aspect of reality has been called Sakti in the Tantras, Maya in the Vedanta. Sakti brings out its energizing character, Maya, its limiting character. Sakti or Maya is the principle of individuation. This principle of individuation is the principle of self-limitation. This self-individuating principle, according to the Tantras (according to the Kashmere school), is inherent in the ultimate reality, Siva. To the Vedanta it is seemingly inherent in the Absolute. This makes out the difference between them. The Tantras regard the world to be the creative play of Siva. The Vedanta also regards it as the creative play, which has empirical, or even pragmatic significance but no real or metaphysical import. The Tantras attach real significance to the creative movement. It is not illusion even as appearance. It is expression (Abhasa) of the Absolute and is real. The Tantras have stressed the dynamic aspect of existence and traced out the evolution of mind, life, and matter out of the original creative Sakti, centred in transcendent Absolute. The wheel of creation moves

eternally; there are cycles when the creative force is withdrawn into the absolute background, where it enjoys the occasional poise before the start of a new cycle for expression. This creative will in the Tantras is more than the urge of life, more than the practical reason (or will). It is the principle of cosmic formation, the Absolute in its creative consciring.

The Tantras avoid two extremes: The absolute distinction and separation between the creative principle and the supreme consciousness; the refusal to accept the principle of change and individuation as transcendently non-existent. It recognizes the principle of consciring as one with the supreme existence.

The theory of causation is not confined to the phenomenal world. Change is self-contradictory in Absolutist metaphysics, for the reality it affirms is not a process and change supposes a process. The Vedanta attempts to make a synthesis of the Scientific view of causation with the Metaphysical Absolute by recognizing that the Absolute contains the principle of efficiency and concrete consciring, which it ultimately transcends. Causation is a scientific concept in the phenomenal world, but its notion is not made clear unless the potential creativity is realized besides the succession of phenomena. This potential consciring is the root of the change. Hence the creative causation is ascribed by the Vedanta to the Absolute. It is no surface change in the phenomenal universe which keeps every detail of phenomenon hung up in the vacuum; the urgency of thought arises to trace out the *creative consciring* to reality. But causation is true of the world of creative consciring, in the order of actuality

but not in the order of reality. Actuality and Reality represent two orders. The Vedanta accepts the category of causality in the order of reality when reality is viewed in the setting of actuality. This reference is overcome when setting is changed in the Absolute Reality. The heart of Reality is more than its expression in creativity. Thought grasps the synthesis of reality and actuality by consciring actuality as creative expression of Reality, which eventually is transcended in the plenum Being. It can be the locus of the world of creative consciring.

At a certain stage of our knowledge just prior to the final illumination, it is necessary in order that nothing outside the reference to the absolute can be conceived. This is the limit of scientific thinking, which the metaphysical thinking modifies by showing that it is preliminary to final, trans-empirical conception of reality. The Vedanta at this stage denies causation and change by withdrawing the individuality or specificness of changes which becomes inconsistent with its identity and sameness. The absolute transcends the controversy implied in becoming or change.

The Tantras almost agree with the Vedanta, but they do not go to the same length and conceive creative consciring as fundamental to reality. The absolute is trans-empirical, but it positively contains the consciring principle. It denies the phenomenal theory of causation, but accepts the dynamic theory. The Tantras do not extend relational thinking to the ultimate reality, for it is really beyond all thinking. And therefore, it will not be strictly cogent to regard the supreme principle in the rela-



tional terms. It is not being-becoming. It is being that becomes. It is consciring reality. The logical categories are introduced when the consciring process starts. Before that it is indefinite and supra-conceptual; hence no ideas of causation can be introduced into it. Abhinava Gupta in his *Pratyabhijnahridayam* accepts a state of being which is non-differential. This non-differentiation does not give the transcendent Brahman of the Vedanta, for the creative consciring is to him real and the ultimate reality is integrated, not by denying but by assimilating the consciring process. To distinguish his trans-conceptual system from the Vedantic point, he calls it *Paramadvaita*. It does introduce the integral character of existence by completely assimilating the consciring activity. It is an integral awareness which does not admit of relations, and naturally transcends the distinction and relation of a logical system. Abhinava Gupta is clear on this point, though he characterizes the ultimate existence as *Sunya*. The mental ways of appraising things are not prevalent here, and naturally it is devoid of conceptual content. The difference between the Vedantic monism and the *Paramadvaita* form of Tantricism is a matter of emphasis on identity. In both there is the displacement of initial ignorance, which introduces differential concepts of actuality and Reality, and the recognition of the self as identical with the Trans-conceptual reality; recognition, because there is temporary forgetfulness. This recognition is the recovery of the lost ground. In the one it establishes the dynamic identity in which the recognitive process is ceaselessly active. In the

other it gives way to the accomplished fact beyond recognition and naturally ceases. There is the constant awareness beyond recognition. Recognition is the intermediate step towards the final realization. In the Pratyabhijna school recognition is assimilated as an element in the immediate, dynamic awareness. This makes the distinction clear between the position of the Advaitist and the Tantriciist of the Kashmere Saivism. Immediacy of awareness is presented in both. Naturally no relational or conceptual sense can subsist anywhere, for the aspiration is to rise above the conceptual limitation of thought and to realize the identity with the basic existence or reality.

The Tantras do not accept the Parinamavada of the Sankhya. No transformation of the Absolute reality can be conceived. It is possible for the Sankhya to accept this, because of the ultimate dualism of a transcendent reality and of creative principle. The Tantras maintain the emergence to be really expressions or projections of the Absolute out of itself and as projections they are non-different from it.

There can be two forms of emergence or projections. The one holds that the emergence or projection is illusion. It is objective, but is not the basic existence. The other holds that emergence is real projection. It is creative expression. It may withdraw, again into the ultimate reality in the state of dynamic equilibrium. But it is not illusion. The individuating principle is non-different from the basic reality, which in association with the creative will assumes a concreteness and individuality, but which it transcends in its initial nature. The Tantras re-

concile the unitive and the creative nature of the Absolute. The reality of the creative act is accepted fully and naturally. The Tantras do not favour the theories of the world as imagination or the world as idea. Both of them introduce 'the subjectivity of the creative act', which the Tantras cannot accept. Ideas are according to the Tantras really forces or projections of will. Will is the primary fact, ideas are derivatives of will. Ideas are mental forms and when we speak of the world as the objectification of ideas, the evident supposition is that the world is a mental creation. Will is the primary energy, the primitive *spiritual act*, which takes the definite forms of ideas when the world of not-self emerges out. Ideas have a reference to it; will has no such reference. The spiritual act is *free* and is not determined by 'the other'. The primitive creative act takes definite lines of expressions. These are objectifications and definite formations in the world of ideas. In affirming this the Tantras do not accept that will or the original spirit-act is an unconscious force. It is the Spirit or Reality in its creativity; since self-consciousness implies a meditating process, this spirit-act or intuition is not self-conscious; though it may attain this at a cosmic stage of expression. It is neither unconscious. The word 'unconscious' has dubious implications. It may imply the absence of consciousness, or it may imply that which is beyond the bounds of the self-conscious. The Tantras reject the former, they accept the latter. Consciousness has a phase which transcends all relativity. Will is the consciousness of spirit in its creativity. This creativity intro-

duces the order of self and not-self, but creativity really transcends it. It has no reference to subjectivity or objectivity. It is not transcendental subjectivity, for this naturally implies the illusiveness of creation or even of the creative act which the Tantras deny. It is really transcendental creativity, a spontaneous free act, which bifurcates (as the *Pratyubhijñahridayam* points out) into a cosmic subject and a cosmic object (*Aham* and *Idam*). There is no relational import in this height of existence. The primordial substance is therefore called *Sunya*, which indicates its transcendence more than its content. The world of space and time is the objectification of this creative act and is not the creative matrix of the universe without reference to it. The space-time world is really contained in the cosmic subject which is the first definite formation of the primordial creative act. This is the beginning of definite formations, and in the creative order the still more definite formations follow and eventually the subject becomes limited to finite consciousness and finite individuality.

The creative advance is attended with limited knowledge and activity; the conceiving in its definite form has its centrality and location. It becomes, therefore, associated with its locus. The centralization becomes more and more definite with creative advance. God is the first definite formation in the process of conceiving, for it has its definiteness. It is the first emergence in the creative advance, though it has its unlimited range and circumference of being. The other definite formation is the finite intelligence. It reflects the finite experience. This gives the

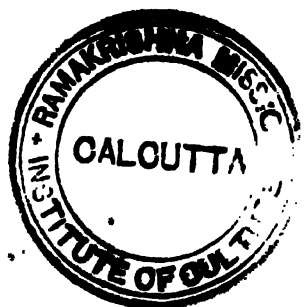
cosmic individual and the finite individual. Here is introduced the world of creative ideal and values distinct from the primordial consciring which is not regulated by ideals or values. The sense of personality is not prevalent there. Personality or personal experiences and the sense of good are definite formations which are husbanded in the conceptual expression. A formation in the creative advance may appear as higher emergence, which it is not. It may add to creative diversity, and emotional novelty; but that which constitutes its uniqueness and novelty is what keeps it separate from the supreme existence and its indefinite being and consciring. There is the oscillation in being to pass from its indefinite to definite formations. There is the counter-movement to break the centralized movement and consciousness, to pass into unfettered being and equilibrium.

The Tantras maintain two kinds of subjectivity in the finite individual and the cosmic individual. The subjectivity is the sense of a concentrated being with its definite expression in knowledge and will. It is really the definite expression of the primordial consciousness as exhibited through determinate creativity and through history. This definite formations have emergence, continuity, and lapse. The cosmic individual has in it the inherent

power of projecting itself into the different forms by which it controls the cosmic process. These forms are not to be supposed as different from the basic cosmic subject; they are its projections. The projections to us have distinct beings and forms; but in reality they are ideal expressions of the same reality. The projections have acquired an individuality by the functions they perform, but their individualities are not absolute. These projections are the cosmic powers.

The same subject, when it is focussed through individual psychism, is the finite individual. The finite individual takes definite expression in accordance with the psychic formation of his being. The cosmic and the individual subjects have no other difference besides the magnitude of their being and power. They are not categorically different. Since the concentration is not absolute, the individual can rise to an immeasurable height of being, but can never forsake his individual concentration, or attain the height of cosmic being. But by spiritual and psychic discipline it is possible for the individual to attain a dynamic identification with the cosmic power and intelligence, to occasionally feel the pulse of cosmic creativity; but this dynamic identification is a temporary possession.

MAHENDRA NATH SIRCAR



## PRAYER TO MOTHER

All Blissful Mother, grant to me  
That I may have pure love for Thee ;  
Here sin and merit, take Thou these.  
But grant to me pure love for Thee.

Yea, Mother, humbly at Thy Feet  
I lay both wisdom and its lack ;  
Take Thou them both ; grant only me  
That I may have pure love for Thee.

Pure thoughts and thoughts that are impure,  
Oh, what have I to do with these.  
I lay them at Thy Blessed Feet,  
And pray grant me pure love for Thee.

All good, all ill, all joy, all pain,  
I lay now at Thy Blessed Feet.  
Oh, Mother, only grant Thou me  
That I may have Pure love for Thee.

Om-Tat-Sat Peace be unto us all.

MRS. LOTTIE I. SCOTT



## THE GOAL AND METHODS OF THE TRUE YOGI

These are the notes taken from the class-talks given by **Swami Yatiswarananda** in Germany in December, 1933—Ed.

### I

The mind should be stilled, no doubt, but then we should see that Divine Consciousness takes its place with new thoughts, otherwise the merely stilled mind is of no use. It becomes a state of dullness or lethargy, but never a state of illumination. Unless we are able to remain wide-awake, to keep our consciousness when the mind is calmed, there is every chance of the mind falling below the level of consciousness to the subliminal plane.

What the Yogi really wants is the higher plane of consciousness, not a state of inertness like stones or stocks.

Yoga means restraining the mind-stuff, not allowing it to burst into waves.

Even in the state of deep sleep, there is no absolute unconsciousness. All the so-called unconscious processes go on, only very rhythmically, but for all practical purposes it is an unconscious state in which the soul even forgets self-consciousness. The self-conscious principle is shrouded in a kind of ignorance. We do not get wiser in any way because of deep sleep. We do not attain illu-

mination. Only the brain and the body feel a little invigorated by it.

In the lower states of Samadhi the breath and the heart-beats may continue, but in the higher state both stop.

Out of the causal comes the sub-conscious aspect of mind, and out of this the conscious aspect. The mind is like an ocean, and in this the conscious mind is at the most like a small island. In the lower layers of the mind there is always movement, but in the really deeper layers there is no movement at all.

## II

Sankaracharya says, 'Being is everything, becoming is nothing.' And in Gaudapada's *Karikas* on the *Mandukya-Upanishad* we find, 'As belief in the unreal attaches the mind to the unreal, knowledge of absolute non-evolution frees it from relativity and turns it away from the unreal.'

In Sat, 'being,' there can be no question of evolution or involution at all, and becoming is only true on the relative plane, and even then all becoming must have an end somewhere, and it must, one day, end in being. Seen from the highest standpoint, evolution is a myth, but the idea of evolution serves its purpose for a time on the relative plane. Our great thinkers were very thorough-going in everything they taught. They were not afraid of Truth and what it implies.

The Vedantin of the Advaita school knows there is no evolution in reality. What is real, cannot evolve. What is permanent and unchanging, cannot evolve. So being alone is real and nothing that pertains to change or to evolution is real. There is never a break in the

Soul's consciousness. It may be clouded by Avidya and by imagining all sorts of untruths.

## III

The state of spiritual experience is not unconsciousness. It is something positive. It must have a positive content. It must never be negative, and it is the very opposite of inertness. Falling below the level of consciousness, to the subliminal plane, is not spiritual experience. In the West, very often, this point is misunderstood and hopelessly distorted, especially by the missionaries who do not know what they are talking about.

In the state of spiritual experience the Soul becomes conscious of itself as it is. At other times it is identified with all the different modifications of the mind. And it is the task in Yoga to separate oneself from these modifications. The self is something that is utterly distinct from the body and the mind; and the Self, as such, knows neither evolution nor involution, nor any becoming or development. It is a wrong notion that the real can evolve; because evolution means change, and anything that can undergo any development can never be real.

## IV

What we have to attain is Brahman-consciousness as distinct from Jiva-consciousness. But in the path there are some dangers which we have to meet, and one of them is to identify ourselves with the causal state of our personality, the Anandamaya-Kosha, the sheath of Bliss, as it is called, which is not the ultimate reality, but which makes us feel very happy and elated.

'Brahman is the self-conscious Principle that animates everything. It is the ear of the ear, the eye of the eye, the mind of the mind, the source of all vital energy. Knowing thus the wise give up all false identification of the Self with the senses and the mind etc. and become immortal.'

'It is never perceived by the eye, nor by speech, nor by the mind. We know It not; nor do we see It. How to teach one about It? It is different from all that are manifest and known, and is beyond even all that are unmanifest and unknown. Thus have we heard from the ancient seers who explained this to us.'

'What none can comprehend by the mind, but by which the mind can be comprehended, what none can see with the eyes, but by which the function of the eye can be seen, know that alone as Brahman and not that which people worship here.'

## V

People who still have some attachments, who are not comparatively free from attachment, cannot really care for Vedanta, nor can they really care for the teaching of Christ. Such people do not like it, because all the Great Ones have preached renunciation as the only way. For people who do not lead a moral, pure, controlled, and non-attached life the teaching of Christ as well as of Vedanta is absolutely useless and cannot have any place in their lives, as such people can never realize their goal. Without purity, non-attachment, non-violence, and dispassion in thought, word, and deed, there can be no form of spiritual life; whatever other name you may choose to give it.

People who are not prepared to renounce their attachments, who permit themselves to be governed and influenced by lust, anger, and greed, cannot take to spiritual life and can never be Vedantins or followers of Christ. I do not say Christians, because most of the so-called Christians have nothing to do with Christ.

## VI

While doing Japa you should give very strong suggestions to your mind so that at each repetition of the Holy Name or sound your mind becomes purer and purer, that your whole being becomes cleansed by the purity of the Holy Name or sound, that all the encrustations shrouding your reality brought about by your past passions and impurities are blasted, that all the superimpositions removed, and that your true being is thus liberated and brought to light.

And then, all the preliminary conditions of Yama and Niyama must be strictly fulfilled; and this not in a gross way only. Before that you cannot attain anything. How could this be possible? Nothing will change, nothing will come, if these have not been fulfilled by you. First their fulfilment means strain and effort. Later on it becomes natural and easy; but you will have to pass through this period of great struggle, or have to go away, sad at heart, like the youth who came to Christ to ask Him what he should do. That youth was not able to renounce; so he could not do anything; could not follow Christ's words and had to go away in sadness.

## VII

In the spiritual realm Vedanta means allopathy and not homeo-

pathy at all. Vedanta is out-and-out allopathy. Strong injections and large doses of medicine are required. There is no such thing as homeopathy in Vedanta. Homeopathic treatment won't do in the case of the Vedantin, because Vedanta must never be diluted if it is to be at all effective. You see what has become of Christ's teaching by endlessly diluting it.

Desires and the senses are our constant enemies, hence the absolute necessity of leading a disciplined and controlled life. There is no limit to the all-consuming power of desire, and so long as this is permitted to hold sway over us we shall not be able to follow any of the spiritual teachings given us by the Great Ones. There should be no conscious or unconscious veiling of this fact.

No one who constantly stimulates those centres in the brain which act on the sexual nerve-centre in the body can even think of leading a spiritual life. It all becomes sham and a hypocritical counterfeit of the real thing. In modern life very often things are being done to stimulate sexual desires—through the cinema, through literature, through dancing; through music, through conversation, through drugs and intoxicants, etc.; and so long as a person does not realize this fact, he does not become fully awake to it—he is not able to lead a spiritual life, neither is he able to be a follower of Christ.

This is really the Kali-Yuga. Everything has become body, animal, brutish. You can clearly see why the Great Ones like Buddha, Christ, and Sri Ramakrishna, why the great messengers of humanity like Mahatma Gandhi in our days, have to fight everything that in anyway pertains to sex. For sex brings destruction,

and wherever there is sex, there you shall find the manifestations of brutality, because they are closely interconnected. And modern civilization has raised sex to the position of a god and constantly sings praises of sexual love in its literature, cinemas, theatres, and general conduct of life. It is just pandering to the lowest animal propensities in man.

For spiritual culture the most essential thing is a healthy mind, a pure mind, a mind that has not become perverted, that still has the capacity to strive after realization.

### VIII

It is not possible for us to take up each individual hankering and rid ourselves of it. No; a general pitiless massacre is necessary. When we turn to the Divine, allow Him to light the Divine Light in us, all darkness will vanish at once. Then He Himself appears on the battlefield and fights for us. The Lord does His work, but we must also do our part so long as we have our individuality, or are still conscious of being individuals. We have to give up our clinging to this world of manifestation. We have to give up all bodily and worldly desires. We have to renounce all attachments and all 'duties' pertaining to these attachments. That is the only way by which we can rid ourselves of the troubles and miseries of life and the darkness that is shrouding us from the Light. Allow Him to bring about our transformation, to give us the capacity to follow the Higher Life. Let us pay no more heed to the world than is absolutely necessary. We are always in the world, whether we live in the monastery or outside the monastery. We cannot run away

from the world. But we must never allow the world to absorb our attention.

The energy at our disposal, physical as well as mental, is so very limited that we have to use it for spiritual purposes and not waste it in the world and for the world. This, no doubt, means tremendous struggle, but we have to pass through it. There is no other comfortable short-cut. Let us try to be in tune with the Cosmic Power, and then this Cosmic Power works through us. This process is to be a conscious one, not an unconscious one as it usually is.

We have been caught in the net of Mahamaya and we must get out of it. Allow the Lord to be the Ferryman that takes you across the turbulent ocean of Maya to the shore of Immortality.

'O my Shiva, O my Ferryman, do Thou take me to the other shore beyond this ocean of Life and Death.'

### IX

It is necessary for us to surrender ourselves whole-heartedly to this Ferryman. But self-surrender can only come after long and desperate struggle. Real self-surrender is not an easy thing.

When doubts arise in the mind, you must brush them aside with an effort of the will. Our word *Shraddha* means much more than mere faith. *Shraddha* always brings to the aspirant an amount of faith in himself. So Nachiketas in the *Kathopanishad* says, 'I am not a worthless person'. Never think you are a worthless person. Be ever ready to face even death for the sake of spiritual life.

Having a faith that is not dynamic, that has no transforming power, a

faith that does not make us intensely active in a higher sense, is no use. It must make us tremendously strong in the pursuit of spiritual life.

The man who constantly entertains in his heart destructive doubts comes to grief. He can never attain anything in spiritual life.

'One who is ignorant and at the same time does not possess *Shraddha*, one who possesses an eternally doubting heart, comes to destruction', says the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Unshakable faith comes only when faith merges into experience, not before.

### X

Divine Knowledge transforms life altogether. Attaining to this knowledge there are souls that transform other lives altogether, not only their own lives. If we do not see Him it is owing to the impurities of our mind. But this is no reason for our saying that God does not really exist. If God is, we must be able to see Him some day, sooner or later. But first we must develop our own inner power of vision and purify our mind. Today our mind is gross, and with a gross mind we can only see the external world, but never anything subtler than the grossest forms of manifestation.

We must get a mental telescope. This capacity lies dormant in everyone of us. It does not come from outside, nor can it ever be superadded to our true nature. But then it is something that we do not care to develop. When the mind becomes pure to some extent, we begin to feel the presence of something more permanent and vaster within us. Spiritual life means making this mind subtler and subtler. It does not mean



making this mind more and more hair-splitting. We should always be on our guard against too abstract flights of thought which are not given any reality in the expressions of our own lives. It is better to be a Bhakta than a hair-splitting make-believe Jnani. And none can become a true Jnani without having almost completely purified his mind. So these sham Jnanis we meet should not be taken seriously. There is always a danger for certain minds to raise wonderful philosophic structures and revel in them which do not transform their lives, and for most people the safer and quicker path is the path of Bhakti tempered with a certain amount of Jnana. This is what Swami Vivekananda really wanted. There are some very clever and highly intellectual minds which even split hairs which nobody wanted them to split. I meet so many people talking in glowing terms of Advaita and of the Absolute that I am becoming afraid of them and their wonderful knowledge. They do not even know what they are talking about.

## XI

The mental world is infinitely vaster than this gross world. When we catch a glimpse of the glory of this inner world of thoughts, the external world and all its attachments lose all charm for us. But first we must prepare ourselves thoroughly to get access to this inner world of ours.

'Dhyana (meditation) is an unbroken flow of homogeneous thought like the flow of oil which is being poured from one vessel into another. And when this Dhyana is continued

for a longer time it merges into Samadhi.

'Meditation is consciousness solidified, concentrated, a sense of existence solidified, concentrated, intensified.

'If ever you have a glimpse of the peaceful state, call up the memory of that. It will always have a soothing influence on your mind. Dwell on that. Very often we dwell on all sorts of useless memories. Why not dwell on this kind of memory?'

'Being steadfast in Yoga, O Dhananjaya, perform actions, abandoning attachment, remaining unconcerned as regards success and failure. This evenness of mind is known as Yoga.

'Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas—these Gunas, O mighty-armed, born of Prakriti, bind fast in the body the indestructible embodied One.

'Of these, Sattva, being stainlessness, luminous, and free from evil, binds, O sinless one, by attachment to happiness and by attachment to knowledge.

'Know Rajas to be of the nature of passion, giving rise to thirst and attachment. It binds fast, O son of Kunti, the embodied one by attachment to action.

'And know Tamas to be born of ignorance, stupefying all embodied beings; it binds fast, O descendant of Bharata by miscomprehension, indolence, and sleep. *Bhagavad Gita*, (II: 45 and XIV: 5-8)'

Ordinarily we are the creatures of our moods. But if we sincerely wish to follow the Path, we must stop being creatures of our moods. We must gain perfect mastery over them.

Guna means 'rope' or that which binds the soul. The soul is caught in the meshes of these Gunas.

Spiritual life should not be abstract thought; neither should it be ego-

centric, but cosmocentric. We should not be conscious of the point only, but of the whole circle.

The task of the spiritual aspirant should be to attain the balanced state and, at the same time, to have his eyes on that which is beyond the balanced state.

'That which is like poison at first, but like nectar at the end; that happiness is declared to be Sattvika, born of the translucence of intellect due to Self-realisation. (*Ibid*, XVIII. 37).'

The secret lies in making ourselves cosmo-centric. All are part of the vast Consciousness. Hold on to the anchor. If you do not, you will be tossed again by the waves of delusion. If you do, then in the very depths of your mind there will always be this calmness and balance. The storms and battling waves will only touch the uppermost layers of your mind, but never again disturb it completely.

If we are not able to bring about a transformation in the whole organism, even Sattvika food is of no use to us. The body of Sri Ramakrishna was too Sattvika to be able to assimilate any impure or gross food. But mere physical food will

never transform us. This is a very erroneous idea I find in some people. They cling to their impure minds, allow their senses to take in all sorts of filth, but their physical food for their stomach must be pure. What nonsense. If the food I take through my eyes, my ears, my touch, etc., be not pure, the purity of material, physical food for my stomach is unessential. Spiritual life is not to be found in the kitchen-pot.

## XII

'The fourth is that which is capable of destroying all evils, ever changeless, of all beings the One without a second, effulgent, and all-pervading.' (*Gaudapada*).

This is the goal, and we should know it, but once having known it, we should busy ourselves with the path and not so much with speculation as to the wonderful nature of Truth. If it is to have any effect, Vedanta must be made practical. Theories, wonderful thought-structures, as such, have no value in life, and just form one more of the innumerable delusions we cherish so much.

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

## SOME SAYINGS OF KABIR

LIKE Sri Ramakrishna, Kabir, too, never wrote anything himself, or dictated anything. His teaching was wholly oral. The *Bijak* (Sakhi 187) says:— 'I neither touched ink nor paper, nor did I take a pen into my hand; to the sages of all four ages Kabir declared his word by mouth.' The earliest collections of Kabir are to be found in the *Adigranth* of the

Sikhs and in the *Bijak*, a work compiled sometime after Kabir's demise. But as is usual in the case of the works of some other religious celebrities these sayings have also been continuously supplemented. In a work printed in Lucknow we find no less than 2500 Sakhis. But the *Bijak* contains about a little more than 400 Sakhis only. *Bijak* means an

account book, an invoice. Sakhi or Sakshi is a couplet in which Kabir bears evidence to a truth.

We give below some of the characteristic sayings of the great saint. They are taken from the well-known work of Rev. G. H. Westcote.

Who whilst living goes on dying, he lives again; in this he is absorbed in space; he who remains in the darkness, unaffected by darkness, is no more thrown into the sea of existence. (A: *Adigranth*)

Sandal, restrain thy fragrance! On thy account the wood is cut down; the living slay the living and regard only the dead. (B: *Bijak*).

If one takes nectar and besprinkles on a Neem tree its nature does not leave it, says Kabir. (A).

If your Khuda wished circumcision, he would have sent you circumcized into the world. If by circumcision you become a Mussalman, in that case what should you do with your women? A woman is said to be the half of man; being so, would she remain a Hindu? If by wearing a sacred thread a man becomes a Brahmin, then what do your women wear? They by birth are Sudras, why should you being a Pande take the meal placed by them before you? Whence have the Hindus and the Mussalmans come? Who has started these religious systems? Think well in your hearts: Who has obtained heaven? O madman, give up the illusion of this world. O brother, you resist the warnings of conscience. Kabir is on the road to God and is marching on to his end forsaking all partial views. (B).

Is Brahm. great or he by whom he, is produced? Is the Veda great or He from whom it is come? (A).

As long as the sun does not rise, the stars sparkle; so, as long as perfect knowledge is not obtained men practise ritualism. (B).

Whilst dwelling in the womb there is no clan or caste; from the seed of Brahma the whole creation is made. Say, O Pandit, when were the Brahmins made? By saying 'I am a Brahmin', thy life and religion are lost.

If thou art a Brahmin, born of a Brahmin woman, why hast thou not come in another way? Whose art thou the Brahmin? Whose am I the Sudra? Whose blood am I? Whose milk art thou?

Kabir says, who reflects on Brahma he by me is called a Brahmin. (A).

Colour proceeds from colour, yet behold all are but one. Of what colour then is life? Think well of this. (A).

No act of devotion can equal truth; no crime is so heinous as falsehood; in the heart where truth abides, there is My abode. (A).

If I make the seven oceans ink, if I make the trees my pen, if I make the earth the paper, the glory of Hari cannot be written. (A).

If fear of God springs up, fear goes; then fear is absorbed in the fear of God. (A).

Thou shouldst ride on thy own reflection; thou shouldst put thy foot into the stirrup of tranquillity of mind. Kabir says, those are good riders who keep aloof from the Veda and Koran. (A).

All speak of God, but to me this doubt arises—how can they sit down with God whom they do not know? (B).

Kabir says, Hear, O man and brother, without the name of Ram no one has obtained salvation. (A).

The Atma and Paramatma remained for many ages apart, the true Guru came and made of them a beautiful mixture.

As he revolves his rosary, life passes away and he knows not the secrets of his heart. Throw away the rosary of the hand and revolve the rosary of the heart.

A man steals an anvil and offers a needle as alms: he climbs aloft to see how distant is the chariot (of heaven).

Apart from life, life comes not into existence; life lives on life; refuse not to have pity on life; Pandit, take thought on this.

The lascivious, the ill-tempered, and the covetous—for such devotion to God is impossible. Brave is the man, who for devotion to God, is ready to give up caste and family.

Live on friendly terms with all; be ready to speak about all; in word agree with all men; but abide in your own abode.

The mirror of God is the body of the Sadhu. He initiates to see, let him see, the invisible in him.

He who has chosen a bodily Guru (a Guru by outward appearances

only) and has failed to recognize the true Guru, time after time, he rises and sinks ensnared in the ocean of existence.

The *chela* should be willing to give everything to his Guru; the Guru should refuse to take anything from his *chela*.

The earth said to the potter, why do you trample on me? The day will come when I shall trample on you.

The wood that has already been burnt (charcoal) that too cries out: 'If I go to the blacksmith's forge, I shall be burnt a second time' (Sinners die once in this world and a second time in the world to come).

Ask not a Sadhu about his caste; but ask about his knowledge of God. When you are determining the price of a sword there is no need to consider the sheath.

Where is the boundary of the heavens? What is the weight of the world? What is the caste of a Sadhu? What is the price of the Alchemist's stone?

M. A. DORESWAMY IYENGAR,  
M.A., B.L.

## HUMAN ENDS

The following writing of Professor S. R. Sarma, M.A., has a noteworthy interest at the present crisis.—Ed.

Has India suffered too much from Vedanta, or suffered at all from Vedanta, is a question which might be relevantly posed before at least the readers of *The Vedanta Kesari*. We are often told by foreigners, particularly by those among them

that are inebriated with the wine of Progress (in the peculiarly Modern sense), that the greatest obstacle in the path of our National advancement has all along been our preoccupation with Religion and Philosophy, —or is it rather with religions and 'philosophies'? It is therefore worth our while asking ourselves whether this is true, and if we are convinced that way, whether our goal should be

to try and transform India into another England or Japan. If this were a desirable metamorphosis, journals like *The Vedanta Kesari* ought to be suppressed, because they feed the public with such devitalising stuff as religion and philosophy. We as a Nation are at the junction of at least two roads: Should we look West or should we look East?

The sun of the modern Western civilisation has reached his zenith, and his blinding light has flooded heaven and earth, beckoning the backward peoples and countries to join in the forward march of Humanity. Indeed, the summons has reached the heart of many a slumbering nation, and already they are jostling one another in their hurry to catch up with those in the vanguard. We are too shrewd to lag behind. We are also awake and active. The question is whether we should *lead* or only *follow*.

Not only India, but the world also appears to be at the cross-roads. If the sun has already reached the zenith, he will soon be declining in the West. Should we not think of other lights for the coming night? Shall we find them in the West or in the East?

Religion and Philosophy are supposed to be primarily concerned with worlds other than the one which *matters* for most of us for all *practical purposes*. We are expected to concern ourselves with the now-here realities which are palpable, instead of following the chimerical will-o'-the-wisps of God and Soul which are no-where! But discerning observers—or sufferers—of the present world crisis have already begun to get disillusioned by the glammers of a too materialistic civi-

lisation and are looking in vain for deeper and more satisfactory philosophies. Whence is light to come except from the Orient? What other country is there in the Orient, than the ancient home of the world's most enduring philosophies—India?

If India neglected the realities of this world in the past she has sufficiently suffered for it. The corrective has come from the West. But medicine, however necessary and wholesome, cannot be a substitute for food. Our national staple has been Philosophy. We cannot forego that without ceasing to be ourselves. We need not necessarily put our hands into the fire to learn its scorching lessons. The example of others ought to suffice. Those who have been scalded are already seeking for a balm. That much needed balm is in our Philosophy.

We have refused to be satisfied with the purblind views of realities of the so-called progressive peoples. Our vision of Reality has been more penetrating. Let us not lose our grasp of this because of the deceptive glow of false lights.

The West is full of energy, but is it to any enduring purpose? Is not the friction caused by that energy threatening to burn up and consume the entire fabric of civilised society? If our philosophies have devitalised us, has not Western civilisation been dehumanising? Has not the Machine taken hold of their Soul? What indeed shall it profit a man to conquer the whole world and lose his own Soul? Long ago their prophet warned them that those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. The 'war to end war' is about to end human existence itself. 'Thou shalt not live by bread alone' Christ told.

them. 'Well,' thought the European, 'I shall add butter to it, then jam, then spices, etc.' But Jesus was an Oriental seer. He did not mean all that. He pitted His Soul against the worshippers of power; they are dead and contemptuously forgotten. His spirit endures, but they perceive it not. They built churches to worship His crucified form. The supreme end to which Christ sacrificed His body eluded the understanding of the Western mind.

The purpose of these lines is not to define 'Human Ends.' They are to

be realised, not defined. But at this juncture of civilisation, the West is stewing in its own juice. We should beware of following them, especially if this should cost us our Soul. Our conception of 'Human Ends' is more precious. Humanity expects us to preserve it. We cannot be satisfied with bread alone—not even with butter and jam and spices added. It is to carry this message to a lacerated world that the Lion of Vedanta roars.

S. R. SHARMA

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**An Introduction to Indian Philosophy:** By S. C. CHATTERJEE, M.A., Ph.D., AND D. M. DATTA, M.A., Ph.D. PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA. PAGES 464. CLOTH-BOUND.

There are already in the field three famous works of very great merit on Indian Philosophy covering more or less the entire ground, namely, the works of Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Das Gupta, and Prof. Hiriyantha. The works of the first two are encyclopaedic and much advanced for the purpose of the ordinary student who wishes to be initiated into the subject. Moreover they are very costly. Prof. Hiriyantha's Introduction, though quite suitable, is too profound and critical to form the very first book to be read on the subject by a beginner who had not any training in philosophy before. The present volume therefore is not a superfluity, but fulfils a real need. It is narrated in a very simple style, closely following the source-books, which are often indicated in the foot-notes, and explaining in detail the systems treated from within, and without criticizing them from any other standard. The introduction of criticism into a work intended for the beginner, who is to gather his first know-

ledge from the book itself, hinders and blunts the interest aroused by the facts which he tries to grasp for the first time. The avoidance of it makes the present *Introduction* very welcome for the purpose it is intended to serve.

The book is constructed in ten well-planned chapters. A general introduction of about sixty pages opens the book giving pointedly and lucidly the basic features of Indian Philosophy and a brief sketch of the nine systems dealt in the book. The second chapter treats of the philosophy of materialism obtained in India. The eight chapters that follow elaborately present the tenets and doctrines of the heterodox systems such as Jainism and Buddhism, and the six orthodox systems, namely, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Yoga, Purvamimamsa, and Uttaramimamsa, each being considered in one chapter. Any system of Indian Philosophy can be logically and conveniently studied under the three clear-cut topical heading: Epistemology, Ontology or Metaphysics, and the religious and ethical implications as well as the conceptions of God and soul advocated by each. The present book follows this rational scheme in each chapter, which is preceded and followed by a proper introduction and conclusion. The box-

heading indicating the central ideas in each paragraph is an important device to bring to mind the salient features at a glance. Certain sections which give details that are not essential for the understanding of the outstanding facts of the system at hand are printed in smaller type so that it may be omitted in the first reading if a general understanding alone is aimed at first.

Vedanta is generally believed to be the crown and fulfilment of all other systems and the treatment of it is left to the end in many Hindu works like the *Sarvadarsanasaṅgraha*. Here too the last chapter is devoted to the study of Vedanta. But the treatment should have been more elaborate. Of the three common varieties of Vedanta the Dvaita system has received no attention even though Viśiṣṭadvaita is discussed at some length. We wish the book to be placed in the hands of every student of Indian Philosophy as the very first book, to be studied provided he wishes to pursue his study in English. The University of Calcutta as well as the learned writers have deserved hearty congratulations from all lovers of the philosophic culture.

Annals of the Sri Venkateswara  
Oriental Institute, Tirupati, Vol. I,  
Part 1: EDITOR: K. V. RANGASWAMI  
IYENGAR.

The plan of diverting the surplus funds of the famous and opulent Sri Venkatesa Shrine at Tirupati for the creation and up-keep of a great place of learning has taken a healthy shape under the guidance of a veteran educationist and experienced scholar, and has impressed itself on the educated public at the very start by the convening of the All-India Oriental Conference for the year as well as the publication of a high class research magazine the first issue of which we have the pleasure of welcoming now. The excellence of this issue undoubtedly gives an idea of its destined role. The first part of it gives nine scholarly articles dealing with epigraphy, textual study and criticism, philosophical interpretation and allied topics. The high scientific standard of these writings is guaranteed by the names of the writers themselves—Dr. Ganga Nath Jha, Dr. S. K. Belvelkar, Dr. V.

Raghavan, Dr. K. C. Varadachari and others. The second part is practically a very instructive monograph on the development of Sanskrit studies and research in India briefly and ably delineated by the Director of the Institute with a wealth of interesting information. The last part gives the unpublished text of the *Aṭṭisamhita*. What we are constrained to observe in this connection is that there is a good deal of colourless pedantry in modern researches; a very large measure of labour and ingenuity is spent in inventing hypotheses often based on changing evidences. While retaining academic precision, scholastic exactitude, and even scientific outlook as far as advisable, we hope, the *Annals* will pay special attention to the publication of articles codifying and expounding religious, philosophical, and historical facts contained in ancient texts with the spirit of Śraddha rather than the spirit of the critical surgeon who with his philological scholarship and scientific methods very often fails to see the soul of a culture incarnate in the texts he has dissected and disentrained under literary strata, interpolations, textual corruptions, plagiarisms, and the like, or the anthropologist who is ready to view all these as specimens in the museum.

The Letters of Swami Vivekananda:  
PUBLISHED BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA  
ADVAITA ASHRAMA, MAYAVATI, ALMORA,  
HIMALAYAS. PRICE RS. 2-4-0. PAGES  
420.

It is impossible to trace and register fully and precisely what an amount of influence these letters have exercised on the minds of educated people of our country ever since their first publication some decades back. Swami Vivekananda's dazzling intellect was a precious jewel of hundred facets and his recorded utterances reveal the beauty of each; but none so poignantly as these letters. There are very few problems of life which he did not grapple with or compelled to yield a suitable solution. Hence in these letters one is face to face with an unimpeachable document of vital feelings, precious thoughts, cherished remembrances, productive imaginations, weighty resolves, imperious commands, rich experiences and affectionately caustic criticism which are

sure to arouse and enrich the life of any confident reader. Apart from their psychological value in studying the mind of a great man through its various phases of development they afford a mine of practical wisdom shedding clear, steady light on several spiritual and socio-religious questions that legitimately rises in the minds of man. This edition is a great improvement upon all previous ones, chiefly by the inclusion of a good many unpublished letters and the adoption of chronological sequence in the arrangement, and we may say without exaggeration that this beautifully bound, gilt-lettered, excellent volume with flexible cover cannot have many peers among recent books when a choice is made for presentation.

**The Sikh Studies:** By SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR. PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS, LAHORE. PAGES 319. PRICE RS. 2—0—0.

The book attempts to give a general survey of Sikh life and Sikh thought in a clear and simple language, beginning from the times of the Guru Nanak down to the present days. To show the various aspects of Sikhism the book is divided into three sections. The first section deals with religion. Herein the author has taken care to present before the reader only the main principles of Sikh Religion, so that any ordinary person can grasp the ideas, by one careful reading. Necessary illustrations from the lives of the Gurus are given to elucidate the principles. The author empha-

sizes especially on Guru Nanak's mission, which was to combine all the different aspects of life into one harmonious whole without bringing into conflict the various creeds.

In the second section the kinetic form of the religious spirit is dealt with. The experiment of Guru Govind Singh to form a commonwealth government is instructive. The two descriptive chapters entitled 'The Sikh Kanya Maha Vidyalaya' and 'The Akali Movement' give interesting information to the reader. One point specially worthy of remembrance is the working spirit of religion behind these activities. The success of the Akali Movement strikingly proves the Sikh spirit of self-sacrifice and courage, infused in them by the martyrdoms courted by the Gurus. The author himself was a participant in the Movement and so he is a better judge of the situation. His description of the Movement is spirited and interesting. Any one who is nationally minded cannot but appreciate the spirit of Sikhs exhibited to save their Religion and indirectly their country. The strict observance of non-violence by the Sikhs in this connection was remarkable. Thus, in this section the political and social sides of Sikh life are pictured.

The few poems and the small stories add to the interest of the work. The pictures and fine get-up make the book very attractive.

It really justifies its title *The Sikh Studies* because it comprises an all-sided view of Sikh life the mainspring of which is Religion.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

**Mahasamadhi of Srmat Swami  
Paramanandaji Maharaj**

Swami Paramananda has entered Mahasamadhi at the Boston Centre of the Mission on Friday, June 21. He was a very gifted disciple of the great Swami Vivekananda. From December 1906 he had been staying in the U. S. A. spreading the gospel of his master in diverse ways. There is a biographical sketch of the Swami entitled *Swami Paramananda*

*and His Work* by Sister Devamata, California, 1926, which gives a glimpse of the magnificent work he has been quietly doing for over thirty years. May his influence be ever with us inspiring and encouraging us on the path which his Great Master called us all to tread.

**The General Secretary's Tour in Ceylon**

Srimath Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, the General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in India and



abroad, arrived in Colombo on Sunday, the 19th May, 1940, on his first official visit to the Mission Centres in Ceylon as well as on a tour to the places of historic and cultural importance. On the day of his arrival in Colombo, a grand public reception was arranged when an address of welcome on behalf of the members, friends, and devotees of the Ramakrishna Mission (Ceylon-Branch) was presented to him under the presidency of the Hon'ble Sir Baron Jayatilaka, Minister of Home Affairs, to which the Swami replied suitably. At Colombo the Swami visited some Buddhist temples, museum, and a few other important places. On Thursday, the 23rd May, he left for Batticaloa with Swami Asangananda and was received at the station by a huge gathering headed by Mr. N. S. Rasiah, Chairman of the U. D. C., and Mr. E. R. Thambimuthu, a member of the Ceylon State Council. At Batticaloa the Swami was taken in a procession and was presented with a civic address by the Batticaloa Urban District Council and by the citizens of Batticaloa to which the Swami replied separately. Next day in the morning he visited some of the schools and the Boys' and Girls' Orphanages and in the evening addressed the boys of the Sivananda Vidyalaya, Kalladi-Uppodai. On Sunday evening he reached Trincomale, where he visited some places including the Swami Rock Temple and addressed a big gathering assembled in the Ramakrishna Mission Hindu College. He also visited Anuradhapura, the ancient capital of Ceylon, with its famous historic remains, the Botanical garden, Paradenya, the Victoria drive and the Lake, the world famous Tooth relic Temple of Lord Buddha, Nuwara Eliya, the Sita Temple at Sita Eliya and the Hagkala Botanical garden. At Jaffna also the Swami was given a public reception and there he addressed the Upper class boys of the Jaffna Hindu College. There was a public meeting in which he spoke nearly for an hour on 'Sri Ramakrishna and World Peace'. The same day he left for India. The visit of Swami Madhavanandaji has left a deep impression on the minds of the friends and devotees who came into contact with him.

**Sri Ramakrishna Advaitasram,  
Kaladi (Travancore).**

Report for the year 1938—1939.

This Ashrama at the birth place of Sri Sankaracharya, started by Swami Agamananda, a monk of 'the Ramakrishna Order, in 1936, has made steady progress during the period under review. Summer classes on various Vedanta books were held which were attended by students from all parts of Kerala. More than 200 lectures were delivered by the Swami in and outside the State, to which there was a good response from the public. Regular religious classes were also held by the Swami. The Ashrama published five books in Malayalam language. The Ashrama Library contained more than 1200 books. Over 2000 persons made use of the Library during the period. The number of students in the Sanskrit School run by the Ashrama rose to 212 in the year 1939. Of these 41 were Christians and 171 were Hindus. The facts in the report show that the progress of the school is very rapid. In the year 1939 the Gurukul provided both free and paying boarding and lodging for 36 students of the school. The free Ayurvedic dispensary in the Dharmadam Centre started at the inspiration of the Swami was well managed by efficient persons. Every year over 1000 patients were treated. The Ashrama appeals for funds for the upkeep and development of its activities.

#### **The Ramakrishna Mission**

##### **Swarnalata Widow's Home, puri.**

The opening ceremony of the Ramakrishna Mission Swarnalata widow's Home was celebrated at Puri with special Puja and Homa, on the Akshya Tritiya day, and a public meeting on the 19th of May under the presidentship of Rai Sahab M. N. Bose, District Magistrate of Puri. The aim of establishing the Home was not merely to serve the widows in a traditional sense, but also to shape their programme in accordance with the changes that had overtaken the world in modern times.

The President thanked the donors Sja. Swarnalata Devi and her son-in-law Sja. Sanat Kumar Roychowdhury (ex-Mayor of Calcutta) for their magnificent gift which would make the institution almost a self-supporting organization.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOLUME XXVII



NUMBER 4

AUGUST, 1940.

---

## CONSOLIDATION OF THE HINDU SOCIETY<sup>1</sup>

I THANK you for the most hearty welcome which you, the Brahmins of this locality, have extended to me this evening. I was really touched by the solemn recital of this locality, have extended to you have received me in this *Bhajanamatham*. The simple and orthodox method of your arrangements has exhilarated me beyond description. I have travelled in different parts of India and America and have addressed many audiences. But this is the first time I am addressing an audience composed mostly of Brahmins belonging to the most orthodox and Vaidika section. I do not think it necessary to teach you the tenets of our most precious religion, Hinduism.

Nothing has pleased me more than the fact that you all know much about Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and his famous disciple Swami Vivekananda and their teachings. I do not think the people in Bengal know so much about the saints and sages who have lived in this corner of India. It shows your quest of knowledge and inquisitiveness about the great sages of distant Bengal. Swami Vivekananda had travelled in these parts before he went on his glorious mission to America. He had noted the great gulf existing between the higher castes and the lower castes on this side, and none viewed it with greater concern nor felt more keenly for the submerged classes of India than he. I am glad to note that the

---

<sup>1</sup> Substance of a speech delivered by Swami Madhavanandaji, Secretary to the Ramakrishna Mission, on 12th June, 1940, at 8-30 p.m., at the *Krishnaswami Bhajanamatham*, in Pashavangadi, Fort, Trivandrum. It was delivered in English and was translated into Tamil for the audience by Mr. E. R. Subramoney Iyer, Advocate, Trivandrum.

temple entry proclamation has paved the way for cementing the bonds among the various classes of Hindus and laid the foundations for Hindu solidarity. Other parts of India have much to learn from you, as you have gone ahead of them. Great credit is due to His Highness the Maharaja, who has taken this right move at the right time. Had Swami Vivekananda been alive today, he would have felt very glad and proud of this great change which has removed the disabilities of the depressed classes in Hindu society. Hinduism will flourish only as long as the Hindus are strong and united. Distinctions and differences among them are making them weak and disunited. None desired it so much as Swami Vivekananda that the Hindus should be ready to meet new and changing situations, and that Hinduism should be restored to its pristine glory.

One way of improving our society is this: The higher classes should treat the lower classes equitably. The Western people, who have great appreciation for our philosophy, laugh at our social inequalities. The Americans appreciate the Vedanta. They have a high regard for our ancient literature and the sublime thoughts of our great Rishis. They have contributed nearly seven lakhs of rupees to erect a temple in honour of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna at Belur, our headquarters. It is high time for us to remove the cobwebs of meaningless distinctions and purge the Hindu society of its evils.

The submerged classes are suffering in many ways. It is they

who have been tilling the land, but they lead a precarious existence. They are illiterate, but they feel a thirst for improvement. So we must note the signs of the times, adjust ourselves to the new circumstances, and make the necessary improvements in our society. None felt so much as Swami Vivekananda the loss of a Hindu by conversion to another religion. In most cases the conversion is not out of conviction but due to the hope of getting some material advantages or to bitter feelings against certain evils of the Hindu society. By losing a friend we often create an enemy. It is high time that we stop the loss by ameliorating the condition of the masses.

Hinduism is a great religion with high philosophy and noble tenets; and we must try to keep as many as possible within our fold. For that work the Brahmins are well fitted. Everywhere and at all times they have taken care to study the Sastras and to teach them to others. Your great countryman Sankara has taught the secret of the Upanishads that the Divine Spirit is in every human being. Therefore we have to realize the Divine among the depressed classes and try to elevate them. For centuries you have been learning and teaching, while they have not. Therefore their children may take a little more time to learn. If they are helped a bit for some time, they will better their position. You must go to them, tell them how to be clean, to study, to understand our ancient books and ideas, and preach to them the sublime truths

of our religion. They must be approached in a kind and loving spirit. You know how Sri Ramachandra and Guha were friends. I want you to treat our depressed classes in the way in which Sri Rama treated Guha. Sri Krishna did the same thing. Sri Ramakrishna also had the same attitude. He was very humble and was prepared to do anything for the lower classes.

I know that you are wise enough to act according to the changing times. When after worshipping Sri Padmanabha I went to Padma Vilas, I asked a friend whether the people here respected the temple entry proclamation because of the fear of the Ruler or for just reasons. He said that the proclamation was most welcome to all classes including the Brahmins, that there was not a word of protest, and that the Brahmins in Travancore were liberal enough to understand and appreciate the underlying spirit of the proclamation and the great good it would bring to Hinduism and the Hindus in general in India. I am much pleased with such a situation. Even a non-Hindu should be allowed to come to the temples. There is nothing wrong even in that. Other religionists can understand us better if they see our places of worship. The Brahmins are noted for their toleration. Hinduism and India have been long famous for toleration. We have no ill-will against other

religions. All religions lead to the realization of God. When respecting other religions, we have to be steadfast to our own religion. Let us not create differences between Vaishnavism and Saivism and give rise to misunderstandings.

At all times and in every country there is something like the caste system. Division of labour is necessary and inevitable. But like all good institutions, caste too degenerated in course of time, and its rigours became so stiff that the substance was often lost and the form only remained. Even in ancient India we have had saints and sages from the lower classes. So in these days of increased facilities and understanding we may get more from them. The Panchamas are also Hindus and they must be given a place in the Hindu Society. If we really feel for them, they will reciprocate the feeling.

God manifests Himself in many ways. Many are the paths to freedom. The fundamentals of Hinduism are well known to you. Small differences in rituals and ceremonies here and there should not be made much of. The present time is a time of crisis. Now the Hindu society should stand united and consolidated. It is a time when Hinduism should be properly studied and understood and widely propagated. Opportunities should not be missed. Not a minute should be lost in setting our house in order.

---

## A STUDY OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

In the following article, **Mr. S. N. L. Shrivastava, M.A.**, Professor of philosophy, Hita-karini City College, gives a lively account of the philosophic and religious views set forth by Dr. Tagore, the great poet of Bengal, in his *Religion of Man*.—ED.

### I

'LISTEN, O brother man, the Truth of Man is the highest of truths; there is no other truth above it.'

—Chandidas.

This sublime utterance of Chandidas which the Poet Tagore has often quoted with much approval in his writings and discourses is the keynote of his own philosophy of religion. The truth that the universe is man's universe is the starting-point, the very alpha, of Tagore's philosophical thought. That the universe is essentially man's universe is, according to Tagore, true in a two-fold sense: First, that the advent of man is the acme of cosmic evolution which therefore finds its highest fulfilment in the creation of man. Man is one with the universe as the crown and consummation of its own unfoldment. His emergence is not an unrelated or fortuitous event in the history of the universe. 'The process of evolution, which after ages has reached man, must be realized in its unity with him, though in him it assumes a new value and proceeds to a different path. It is a continuous process that finds its meaning in Man; and we must acknowledge that the evolution which science talks of is that of Manu's universe. The leather

binding and the title-page are parts of the book itself; and this world that we perceive through our senses and mind and life's experience is profoundly one with 'ourselves.'

<sup>1</sup>

That the definite purpose of cosmic evolution has been to find its true fulfilment in man is evident from the fact that it is man alone who, in spite of his inferiority to other creatures in respect of physical force and magnitude, has survived for centuries while those creatures that encouraged their ambitious flesh to grow in dimensions have nearly all perished of their cumbrous absurdity.

<sup>2</sup>

But what is more significant still is the fact that of all created beings it is man alone who can become aware of his oneness with the universe around him. Both in his social intercourse with other human beings and in his appreciation of the beauties of Nature which leads to the enrichment of his personality. 'He misses himself when isolated; he finds his own larger and truer self in his wide human relationship. His multicellular body is born and it dies; his multi-personal humanity is immortal. In this ideal of unity he realizes the eternal in his life and the boundless in his love. The unity becomes not a mere subjective idea, but an energizing truth. Whatever name may be given to it, and whatever form it symbolizes, the consciousness of this unity is spiritual, and our effort to be true to it is our religion. It ever waits to be revealed in our history

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Religion of Man*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 14.

in a more and more perfect illumination.'<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, the universe is man's in the sense that all knowledge and all truth about the universe is organic to man's intelligence or consciousness. There can be no truth whatsoever which is not a human truth or a truth realized in man's consciousness. This is true of all truths from the lowest to the highest, from the naive everyday observations of the unsophisticated laity to the highest spiritual realizations of saints and sages. No truth is super-human in the sense that it is beyond man's comprehension. If anything is *ex hypothesi* beyond man's comprehension, man has no right to accept it or speak about it. Of course, there can be apparently contradictory truths, as for example, the nature of the table as it appears to our ordinary sense-perception is contradicted by the table as it is when scientifically analysed; but both these truths are truths *for man* and are reconciled in man's own completed knowledge as both being true from different stand-points and for different purposes.

Now, man's knowledge and experience of the universe are not merely individual but universal. Truth is said to be impersonal not because it is independent of the human mind but because 'ideal truth does not depend upon the individual mind of man, but on the universal mind which comprehends the individual.'<sup>4</sup>

Consistently, then, with the view that it is man's consciousness alone which is and can be the receptacle of any truth whatsoever about reality, Tagore has only to speak about the

'Religion of Man'<sup>5</sup> or the ideal of religion which is a truth realized in man's own deepest experience. Tagore would have nothing to do with a religion which is a body of ideas and ideals miraculously attested and beyond the comprehension of man's experience or as something which merely rests on tradition. In the universal light of reason man can harmonize all phases of his experience and in endeavouring to do this he cannot omit from his purview any specific experience howsoever rare or unusual it may be.

## II

Now, what is religion? Religion as understood by Tagore covers all those higher and finer phases of man's experience and activity wherein he expresses himself as a free and creative spirit lifted up above the impulses of his animal nature and the struggles for the mere upkeep of his physical existence. There arises in man a higher urge, a loftier vision, which has nothing to do with his biological necessities. It is this which distinguishes man from other animals of the creation. 'Above the din of the clamour and scramble rises the voice of the Angel of Surplus, of leisure, of detachment from the compelling claim of physical need, saying to men. "Rejoice". From his original serfdom as a creature Man takes his right seat as a creator. Whereas, before, his incessant appeal has been to get, now at least the call comes to him to give. His God, whose help he was in the habit of asking, now

<sup>5</sup> This, as is well known, is the suggestive title of his celebrated Hibbert Lectures which is his main work giving a philosophical exposition of his idea of religion.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 15, 16.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19.

stands Himself at his door and asks for his offerings. As an animal he is still dependent upon Nature; as a Man he is a sovereign who builds his world and rules it. And there at this point, comes his religion, whereby he realizes himself in the perspective of the Infinite . . . . . Religion can have no meaning in the enclosure of mere physical or material interest; it is in the surplus we carry around our personality—the surplus which is like the atmosphere of the earth, bringing to her a constant circulation of light and life and delightfulness.’<sup>6</sup> The religion of man begins when he rises above physical wants, the urges of his animal nature, and realizes his supreme freedom in the apparent bondage of love and moral obligation. He then enters into deeper and wider relationship with the universe which he looks upon not simply as the supplier of his wants and comforts but as the field of his boundless activity of love. He accepts the burden of responsibility to his community for the joy of social relationship. This sense of wider relationship gives a lie to his apparent isolation. Man is not an isolated unit, but an integral member of the entire humanity. Sages have proclaimed their living realization of this solidarity—‘*Vedahametaṁ*’—and have lived in the light of this illuminated vision. Each forward step in civilization takes man farther from the illusion of his separated individuality and nearer to the truth of the whole. Here is a fine passage which admirably brings out the idea of man’s self-transcendence of his individuality in a life of a wider expanse and higher freedom: ‘Just as our eyesight

enables us to include the individual fact of ourselves in the surrounding view, our imagination makes us intensely conscious of a life we must live, which transcends the individual life and contradicts the biological meaning of the instinct of self-preservation. It works at the surplus, and extending beyond the reservation-plots of our daily life, builds there the guest-chambers of priceless value to offer hospitality to the world spirit of Man. We have an honoured right to be the host when our spirit is a free spirit not chained to the animal self. For free spirit is godly and alone can claim kinship with God. The unimaginative repetition of life within a safe restriction imposed by Nature may be good for the animal, but never for Man, who has the responsibility to outlive his life in order to live in truth.’<sup>7</sup>

The soul of man winging in the illimitable expanse of selfless service and love realizes true infinity, the infinity revealed to man in the boundlessness of his love, goodness, and joy—not the mathematical infinity of ‘an indefinite enlargement of the limits of things.’ The infinite which is a positive fact of man’s comprehension is ‘an inner perfection that permeates and exceeds its contents, like the beauty in a lotus which is ineffably more than all the constituents of the flower.’

The consummation of this expansive realization is a soul-felt contact with the Supreme Puruṣa who has been described as: ‘*Eśhadevo viśvakarma mahatma sāda jananaṁ hridaye san-nivishtaḥ*’—This is the Divine being, the world-worker, who is the Great Soul ever dwelling inherent in the

<sup>6</sup> *Religion of Man*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 55.

hearts of all people.' In order to attain oneness with this Mahatma, the Great Soul, 'one must cultivate the greatness of soul which identifies itself with the soul of all peoples and not merely with that of one's own.' This is exactly what is sought to be inculcated by the Buddhistic practice of *Brahmavihara*. The Upanishad also exhorts us to 'enjoy Him through sacrifice'—the sacrifice that comes of love, and to covet not, '*ma gridhah*'; for 'greed diverts your mind to that illusion in you which is your separate self and diverts it from truth in which you represent the *parama purusha*, the Supreme Person.'

The Divine is in man, the Supreme is hidden in the depths of his being and is not a far off Being witnessing with a lofty unconcern the universal drama in which he has called man to be the principal actor. He has pushed man at the crest of the wave of cosmic evolution and given him the knowledge to understand its connected meaning and thus revealed Himself and His plan to him. 'Divine reality, united with man, has given us knowledge and science, our society and civilization, and slowly revealed his luminous presence in history.'<sup>8</sup> When man fails to listen to the Divine in him and utilize His gift of Reason, he suffers and bewails and cries for God as if He were somewhere else. 'To those . . . who in weakling anger sit and lament that God does not come and wipe their tears', says Tagore, 'I would offer the following message from the Upanishads:

*Atha yo' nyam devatam upaste,  
anyo' sau, anyo' ham asmi iti na sa  
veda, yatha pashureva devanam.*

*He who worshipping separate divinity thinks that he is one and divinity another, is like an animal of the gods, . . . ye purusha brahma viduste viduh parameshthinam:* those who know the Great in man know the Supreme God.'<sup>9</sup> A question may well be raised here: If there is the Divine in man, why does man go the way of wickedness and cruelty and sin? Do not the presence of those in human society show that there is no benevolent Providence anywhere in this universe? This is the age-long problem of evil which philosophers and religious thinkers have tackled with varied solutions. Some have said that alongside of a Benevolent Spirit there is also an Evil Spirit, or a Satan, who seduces man and takes him towards evil, thus postulating a duality of opposite Forces. Others have boldly denied that the existence of a 'good' God could ever be reconciled with the presence of evil in the world. Such men would fain think that all that is happening around us points to 'some vast imbecility' at the heart of creation rather than a good and benevolent Spirit. There are still others, front-rank philosophers like William James, Dean Rashdall, McTaggart, James Ward, and others, who have pinned their faith in the conception of a 'limited God,' a God who is not *omnipotent* but limited by forces over which He also has no control. According to Prof. James Ward, God is merely *primus inter pares*. Now, Tagore's solution of the problem is that evil in the world is man's own creation, the result of his flouting the voice of Divinity in him—the Reason

<sup>8</sup> Art. on 'The Indwelling Divinity,' The Modern Review, January, 1940.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.



which is God's highest gift to man. God has not taken upon Himself the task of interfering in man's affairs as a *deus ex machina*, but is always present in the depths of his being giving unto him the supreme light of Reason which is the mightiest problem-solver. The presence of horrid and detestable circumstances around us does not mean that there is no Divine or that the Divine is powerless to remove them, but that man has not been following the light of Divinity in him and vainly complains that God does not come to his help. The very fact of our pronouncing certain things bad and detestable is an index of a higher and an inner voice in us. Tagore makes this tellingly clear by taking the present example of the outbreak of war in Europe and our detestation thereof: 'Sorrow's flood-tide sweeps the world today. Great memorials of history are being washed away, ancient boundaries of civilization obliterated. Barbarism, robbed of its cloak, stands revealed; with arrogant mocking it flaunts destructive revelry against man-kind. From the depths of man's anguished heart comes the cry—why is this? Angry voices are raised refusing to recognize the presence of a benevolent Providence anywhere in this cataclysmic fury. To doubters I ask, were there no principle of goodness at the centre of creation, why does humanity, at the mortal struggle of an age, suffer from this world-wide agony? Does not disease, with its suffering, prove that in the freedom of health dwells life's inherent truth? Suffering is denial, while health is affirmation of life; our body acknow-

ledging this, offers stout fight to the last.' <sup>10</sup>

Religion according to Rabindranath Tagore, consists, in the last analysis, in his endeavour to express the Eternal Man, the Supreme Divine, in all his knowledge, his science, his art, his selfless and disinterested service of humanity and human relations with one another, his boundless love and things of that sort that are the 'qualities which are inherent in the nature of Man the Eternal.' All that constitutes for man his *dharma* 'represents the truth of the Supreme Man.' It is, as T. H. Green would say, the continuous 'reproduction of the Eternal Mind' in man and human history. The fact, however, is that the expression of the Divine in him is not always natural for man; the baser instincts of his animal nature confront his Man-ward path. He has to rise superior to this contradiction: 'We begin our history with all the original promptings of our brute nature which helps us to fulfil those vital needs of ours that are immediate. But deeper within us there is a current of tendencies which runs in many ways in a contrary direction, the life current of universal humanity. Religion has its function in reconciling the contradiction, by subordinating the brute nature to what we consider as the truth of Man. This is helped when our faith in the Eternal Man, whom we call by different names and imagine in different images is made strong.' <sup>11</sup>

S. N. L. SHRIVASTAVA

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Religion of Man*, p. 144.

## THE SCHEME OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

What follows is the report of a discourse given by **Swami Siddheswarananda** at Saint Mande, Paris, in October last. Sri P. Seshadry Iyer, M.L., of Trivandrum has favoured us with this rendering into English from the original French.—Ed.

THE synthetic attitude which characterizes the Hindu spirit has, in fact, deeply impregnated our philosophy and religion. It has also indirectly inspired the multiple manifestations of our activities.

Let us return to that fundamental conception as expressed in the *Bhagavadgita*, because this poem which is the crowning book of the Hindus is also the epitome of all our spiritual conceptions.

We know that Vedanta means the end of Knowledge. This end is the ultimate goal of all human research. Through centuries India has tended towards this search and it has sought to include all the different ways which lead man to the *truth*. This spirit of synthesis is manifested in India on all planes:—1. on the metaphysical plane: all our philosophy and all our theology are impregnated with this; 2. on the social plane: at all epochs of our history all our social, intellectual, scientific, and artistic activities have turned towards this synthetic aspect; and 3. on the physical plane: the accent is placed on the necessity of realizing the equilibrium of the body.

In the Vedas, there is a part which is called the *Ayurveda*, dealing with health. Without health the human body cannot be a fit instrument. It cannot be the proper receptacle of the

Spirit. If we wish to act according to our particular *Dharma*, it is necessary that our organs function properly. India distinguishes two complementary elements. The one is the masculine element, the unchangeable force, the *Purusha*, and the other is the feminine element, the dynamic, the *Prakriti*. The human body is a part of the *Prakriti*. The discoveries of the Hindu Science of health have had a great influence on the modern medical sciences of the West. India has the honour of having taught the importance of the humours in the human body. Physical harmony and synthesis are only the expression of the secretion of the glandular system.

If we pass on to art, we find that the object of that also is to embody the Hindu thought. The European mind cannot but feel a certain repugnance in the presence of an image of Kali. Kali is generally represented in Her terrible aspect. She has many hands. One of these holds a sword; She has a garland of human skulls. Smiles and frowns play side by side in Her face. Kali dances on the body of Siva. This representation is symbolic; it is an attempt of the Hindu mind to call up the vision of a high reality and express it through art. Siva represents the Absolute. He is inert, without movement. On the contrary, Kali represents the dynamic aspect of the Universe. She is the Divine Mother. Her scattered hair evokes the idea of Time. Her face which smiles on one side and is harsh on the other evokes the dual aspect of nature. Nature has two complementary aspects. The bene-

violence and benediction of the smile are in striking contrast with the sword which destroys and kills. It is thus with all the images of the Hindu Pantheon. They seek to represent a particular aspect of the Absolute and by the Absolute we mean the relative Absolute, which acts here in the Manifestation. The artist attempts to figure in an image the philosophic system of Vedanta. This high philosophy cannot be made accessible to ordinary people. In all our images there is the expression of a profound philosophy and if we wish to know the true significance of the image, we must keep in mind the philosophy of which it is the expression.

We see the same spiritual conception in Sociology. The last chapter of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* is devoted to Eugenics and treats of the following questions. How should a man remain in the family and have a strong progeny? The previous chapters dealt profoundly with the most abstruse problems and the last gives practical wisdom on Eugenic science. We see by such examples that the metaphysical aspect has no value or force unless man remains faithful in the performance of the duties of everyday life. It is thus that the whole of society, science, arts, and the relations between individuals are all profoundly modified by the practical application of one fundamental idea. It is well-known that music awakens the spiritual force which is in us. We can attain to Realization without employing any other means. Life is not divided into separate compartments. It is one in all its diverse manifestations. This comprehensive conception of Life is what is called *Dharma*. It does not

work in an isolated, mutilated or broken aspect but in a synoptic aspect which embraces all other aspects.

This conception is not peculiar to India. Plato has tried to find a master idea, an archetype idea. It is to him that Europe owes the conception of the Philosopher King, a conception which has had its repercussion on all modern political systems. We see the same idea in practice in India in the days of Manu, the great legislator. But life cannot remain static. It is not immobile. And the human spirit cannot accept all these laws under circumstances which have changed. The laws of Manu which were just in his time and continue to be the framework of our organization are to be modified to suit modern conditions. These laws are not bad in themselves. It is the application which is defective. The laws of Manu inspire the decisions of Hindu tribunals. If the situation of women in India is not what it should be, it is not our religion which is to be blamed. At a certain epoch the legislator had reduced the laws to suit a particular social state. They are not related to the present needs and so there must be corrections and modifications. The spiritual should work on the social plane also.

We come now to a very important problem, that of the Incarnation. The *Gita* was composed at a time when India was torn by political or social passions. All life was in a state of unrest. Now this is an established fact. When social life is troubled there cannot be a spiritual life. In the lecture which Vivekananda has given under the title 'My Master', he has cited a verse from the *Gita* which says that 'When vice predominates over virtue the Lord

Himself will incarnate. When spirituality is not adequate on the social plane, a spiritual personality re-establishes the equilibrium. If spirituality is found wanting in a particular country, if the atmosphere is sombre and menacing, be assured that the sun will pierce the thick clouds of ignorance. If we apply this to the modern epoch, we have the right to expect a great personality who would re-establish and bring a remedy to the evils from which we suffer. The Divine Benediction can descend on earth not only under the forms of a great personality like Buddha, Krishna, or Kali, It can manifest itself also as a great idea like that which was produced at the time of the French Revolution, when people were enthusiastic for Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. At the end of the great unrest of the 18th Century, humanity discovered a great Idea. Victor Hugo says that the French Revolution should be considered the greatest event on earth since the creation of the world.

When this idea is associated with a great personality, it acquires more force. The principal idea which inspired the French Revolution was a great spiritual idea; but the men who were in power were not sufficiently spiritual. They deformed and travestied it. They had not an internal life sufficiently pure. They had not the necessary *Sadhana*.

In India, the spiritual idea has always been associated with an eminent spiritual personality who has given to it an adequate social and political form. In Europe, the great Idea is often manifested without the support of a great personality. Among us, great men have never failed to appear in the course of our history. There were multitudes who

did not know 'that the light had appeared in the darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it.' In Europe great ideas made themselves manifest, but the men who were at that epoch charged to translate them into the social form were not equal to their task. Among us it is difficult for the masses to remain always in the heights. In the presence of a great personality, they have often forgotten the principle of which the personality is but a manifestation and the worship rendered to that personality had made them lose sight of the principle. All the past has been preserved as in a museum where we preserve in alcohol a biological specimen, witnessing to a life long extinct. In Europe when the idea works, the practical consequences are not attained because the basis is faulty. For the daily life to be transformed, the spiritual idea should be understood by individuals. Otherwise it will be unreal and ineffective.

We now turn to the problem we had stated at the commencement of our talk. There should be a harmony between the body and the mind. There should also be a harmony between the individual spirit and the cosmic Spirit. Now this harmony realized by individual effort is called Yoga and the idea of Yoga presupposes that of Dharma. What is meant by Dharma?

The Conception of Dharma is the fundamental conception of Hindu culture. Everything is based on Dharma. We should recall that the word 'Dharma' is from the Sanskrit root 'Dhri', that which supports, the receptacle, the universal basis. To understand Dharma, we should practise Yoga. By Yoga we can realize in the first place the harmony, the

union between different elements of the personality, and then the union of our personality, with other personalities. Finally our thought unites itself to the Cosmos, all entire.

The *Bhagavadgita* insists on the necessity of enlarging unceasingly our spiritual conception. When we regularly practise meditation we awaken the internal life. We get at that moment an internal peace; but meditation alone does not suffice. The religious effort should be extended further. Otherwise, we would incur the risk of limiting ourselves, of forgetting the duties of our external life. The internal life is nothing but one of the two aspects of Life. The Totality is composed of these two aspects, the internal life as well as the external life. In practising Yoga properly, we should organize our internal life so as to comprehend the relation which exists between the individual self and the Totality. The true peace, the true understanding will not come to us until that relation is established. Yoga should not be regarded as an evasion, a means of escape. In working thus, we conform ourselves to the vigorous teaching of the *Gita*.

If we take the term Yoga in a narrow sense, we cannot comprehend both the phases of Reality and we have to throw overboard the personality, and be out of harmony with the life normal. We shall then be incapable of fulfilling the duties of our everyday life and we shall have no harmony with our surroundings. So long as there exists a lack of harmony with our environments we miss our goal. It is indispensable above all that this harmony should be established.

At the commencement of the spiritual life, we feel very strongly the dangers of the external life. It is then necessary to open ourselves to internal purification until we understand the position of the individual self in relation to the Totality. The aspirant (*Sadhaka*) may break some links with the external life so as to rest in himself and to analyse himself. But he should take care that this new orientation does not make him abnormal.

In practising Karma Yoga, we remain in the world and with the world. We should fulfil without exception all the duties which our social position presents to us. We should not be like Robinson Crusoe in a deserted island. But we have to fulfil all our obligations in a spiritual attitude.

By Bhakti Yoga, we are able to offer everything at the feet of the Lord. The *Gita* puts its accent on the conception of the Atman. We are each of us waves in that immense ocean which is Atman-Brahman.

Whatever be our way, Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga, or Bhakti Yoga, we should fulfil our duties, on the spiritual plane. In other words, our individual self should not in the course of our intellectual researches, our daily activities or the practice of devotion, forget the relation, which the unit bears to the Totality. The *Gita* teaches us that our effort should always be essentially practical. That effort should be exercised in our daily life. We should make ourselves more and more capable of fulfilling effectively the duties of our profession. We see by this the bearing of this idea on the social plane.

The *Gita* works out a synthetic philosophy, which unites conflicting

systems. It indicates specially how we should organize our everyday life. It gives us concrete directions to facilitate the approach to Reality and everyone can find there the solution of one's particular problem. It is thus that in the first chapter we see the

hero Arjuna plunged in an inner conflict. Spirituality cannot work in us except at the time of a conflict and the *Gita* has given us the means of victory in this conflict without evasion on our part.

SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA

## THE FALSITY OF THE WORLD

**Dr. Ras-vihari Das, M.A., Ph.D.** of the Indian Institute of Philosophy is the author of *The Essentials of Advaitism* and other works. The following paper states in what sense the Advaitins declare the World to be a falsity—Ed.

ADVAITISM makes the astounding assertion that the world is false. We shall try to ascertain what it really means and how we can possibly understand it. These are two questions. Even when we know what a particular assertion means, *i.e.*, what a particular statement asserts, we may not at all see how the assertion can be true and to that extent we may fail to understand it.

In itself the above statement seems clear enough. The world is false just as an illusory appearance is false. But the great difficulty we naturally feel in understanding the statement has led some people to think that the statement probably does not mean what it literally says. It is thus supposed that when we say that the world is false, we do not mean that the world is unreal or illusory, but merely that it falls short of absolute reality.

Now it is true that in Advaitic literature we are told that the world is not unreal (*asat*), and it has been sometimes distinguished from dream

and illusion. The horn of a hare and the son of a barren woman are recognized instances of unreal things. A hare has no horn and a barren woman has no son, and they are never seen at all. The world is certainly seen and so it is different from these unreal things. And we can also see how it is in a way different from a dream or an illusion. A dream or an illusion is a discredited appearance; we know that the appearance was false. The falsity of these illusory phenomena is part of their definition, and we do not need to be told that a dream or an illusion is false. The world-appearance, before we have got the right knowledge of the nature of reality, is not a discredited appearance; we still believe it, as we do not believe in what is known to be an illusion. Thus the distinction of the world from dream or illusion seems to be somewhat clear.

But what does all this amount to? The distinction between an illusory snake and the world may be no more than the distinction between a discredited appearance and an appearance which has yet to be discredited, between a deception which has been found out and a deception which we have yet to see through. If it is so then it does not mean any difference in their character. There is no real distinction of metaphysical

character between an illusion that lasts a hundred years or more. As appearance the world does not differ from an illusory snake, and for Advaitism there is no distinction between appearances. The world has no reality in itself, nor has it any place in the heart of absolute reality. The absolute reality, according to Advaitism is pure light (knowledge) in which there is no distinction of any kind, and so it cannot accommodate the world within itself, even as an appearance. The world is nothing but an unreal show. Metaphysically it has no being in itself and is, therefore, nothing; it is as good as the son of a barren woman, certainly no better than an illusory appearance.

It will be generally agreed that the world has no real being in itself. When it has no being by itself or in itself, the only question is whether it can be real in something else. The only thing in which it could be real is the Absolute or Brahma. But it is clearly impossible to make room for the world in the Absolute, without giving up Advaitism. The only reality is Brahman, and Brahman cannot assume the form of the world without falsifying its true nature, which is impossible.

It is sometimes said that the world has no reality from the ultimate or absolute point of view; but it has some reality all the same from our practical point of view. But the question is: What is the right point of view? From what point of view do we get truth? Our point of view is vitiated by prejudice and ignorance, and is therefore quite incompetent to determine truth or reality. It is only the other point of view that gives us truth, and according to it the world

is admitted to be unreal. To say that the world is real from our point of view is merely to say that we still believe in it. It does not decide whether the belief is true, and if Advaitism is right, the belief is certainly false.

We should remember that Advaitism is not merely a system of abstract metaphysics, but a system of spiritual culture as well; the avowed aim of that culture is to realize one's identity with Absolute, and, thereby, to effect a real and permanent dissociation from the life of the world which is one of pain and misery. This aim is certainly not furthered at all when we are asked to believe in the world as a sort of reality instead of calling in question the validity of all such belief. If our object is to reach the spiritual goal, we can never too deeply impress on our mind the utter unsubstantiality of the world-appearance. It thus appears difficult to mistake the meaning of Advaitism when it says that the world is false. It means that the world is as unreal as an illusory appearance.

Now although we may know this to be the meaning of the Advaitic statement, we may not understand how this can be so, how, that is, the world can really be false. There is an evident difficulty in so understanding the statement. We know the appearance of a snake in the place of a stick to be quite false. Here the falsity of one appearance is intelligible only in the light of another appearance which is that of the stick. But when one asserts the falsity of all appearance as such, it seems to carry no intelligible sense to us. To deny the world is to deny our experiences; and such denial carries with

it the denial of all meaning and intelligibility. For we can mean and understand only what falls within our experience, i.e., what we can apprehend by the mind and the senses and the world coincides with this content of our sense and understanding. When we are told that the world is false, we are really asked to disbelieve the given. But it is extremely difficult to withdraw belief from what is given to us in experience. So long, therefore, as we retain our ordinary empirical consciousness, it is difficult, if not impossible, to accept the proposition that the world is false. But Advaitism does not stand or fall on the evidence of ordinary consciousness. We have to rise above the ordinary level of consciousness, if we are to see the truth of the Advaitic position or even to understand it. We must call to our aid the evidence of a spiritual revelation which would turn our mind away from the world towards some higher reality. There must be a sudden and radical change in our mental outlook. We are now, so to say, imbedded in the body and our mind is engrossed in material interests, and this is the great reason why we apprehend the world with such overpowering sense of reality.

But if our mind could take a spiritual turn and lose interest in material things, these things would lose their solid reality and appear as shadows, to be dissolved, ultimately, in the light of pure knowledge. So long as our mind is obsessed with material interests, it is impossible for us to realize, and difficult to understand, the falsity of the material world. What is needed therefore for a right understanding of the Advaitic position is not so much a training in logic as a spiritual discipline which will purify the mind of all its objective interests, gross or subtle. Advaitism offers to initiate us into the life of a free spirit, and we can qualify for it, only when we realize that for such a life and such a spirit the world of matter has no worth or significance; for the aspirant after such a life, it is at best an impediment. *The world is false* is thus best understood when it is taken not as a theoretical judgment of fact, but as a practical judgment of value. It seems that the material world has no worth or significance for spiritual life. This only defines our approach; we have to realize at the end that even theoretically the world is not.

R. DAS

## AIDS TO SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

The following sections are from the notes of **Swami Yatiswarananda's** class talks in Germany, given in December, 1933.—Ed.

### I

WE should always try to give the instructions we receive some practical expression in life. Philosophy is all right as the background, but the

application to life must never be lost sight of.

'Through the purity of food comes the purity of senses, through the purity of senses comes steady memory of Truth, and when one gets this memory one becomes free from all bonds.\* Then the mind thinks of Brahman in an unbroken stream. As I have said many a time, everything



that comes in contact with the senses is 'food'. We must have pure food for the eye, the ear, the touch, the smell, etc. Taking pure physical food for the stomach without purifying all the food that is taken in by the senses is no use. 'If by taking the purest of Sattvika food a person does not turn the mind to the Divine, fie unto him. If he takes contaminated food, but is able to turn the mind to God, blessed is he'—this is what Sri Ramakrishna used to say.

## II

The Gunas are like ladders leading us to the terrace. The indolent person must become active, the active person must become pure. And Sattva is the topmost rung of the ladder leading to the Truth, but not Truth as It is.

Our purity must lead us to God-realization. Attaining to the Divine means going beyond all the Gunas. All these Gunas are like robbers who do not dare to have access to the town. Our goal should be the Divine and Divine realization, i.e., to realize Him within ourselves, and then to realize Him in all others also. The ideal is the person who is not bound by any Gunas, who has known God, who remains always indifferent to all actions of the Gunas. When by getting rid of the evil tendencies with the help of purer thoughts one is able to get a glimpse of Truth, transcending even Sattva, he comes up to the highest rung of the ladder in a Sattvika state, but he can never again go below that highest rung.

## III

Mere ethics does not make a man spiritual. Mere morals are no proof whatever for the spirituality of a

person. This is the great mistake of what is generally called Protestantism. Morals are necessary, and there can be no spirituality without previously leading a perfectly moral life, but they can lay no claim to spirituality which far transcends the plane of morals.

'Having mastered all the scriptures and having given up all learning, be like a child. And then after attaining to your spiritual childhood live a life of meditation.'

We should all cultivate great simplicity and be free from all desires and passions which make us more and more complex and impure. We should minimize all personal feeling and all personal relationships with others by stressing the Divine more and more and becoming more conscious of the Divine than of others. Never commit the mistake of loving a person for his or her own sake. The feeling of love is all right, but the very moment its true aim is hidden it turns into side-paths and brings us no end of misery and delusion, although many people, for a time, call this happiness.

## IV

We should avoid all forms of austerity that are merely Tamasika. So Sankaracharya says, 'Simply by making the body dirty, one does not become like a child.' No, certainly not. This spiritual childhood is characterized by perfect mental purity, sense-control, freedom from lust in all its forms, and freedom from passions and desires. One who goes beyond all Gunas is no longer bound to any particular mood.

## V

The spiritual aspirant should feel he is an instrument in the hands of

the Cosmic Power. The best attitude is that of an instrument, knowing oneself not to be the doer, not to be the agent.

Let us take an example. There are different clocks all driven by the same electric energy. If every clock just thinks that it goes by its own strength, this is a serious error. We are all parts of a mighty energy that is working through us and with us. We should always try to be cosmocentric and become as impersonal in everything as possible. This body and the mind are instruments of a mighty Power. To what extent we are able to become cosmocentric and more and more impersonal, to that extent we succeed in giving up all ideas of agency and we attain to peace. The more we run away from the Divine, the more miserable we become.

'Mother, Thou hast created this vast universe, and Thou alone as all beings art coming in touch with the outside things. Thou art the only doer. Thou art the only enjoyer.'

Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'Mother, I am the machine, Thou art the mechanic. I am the house, Thou art the mistress of the house. I am the chariot, and Thou art the charioteer. I do as Thou makest me do. I speak as Thou makest me speak.'

## VI

If at any time dejection comes, still go on with your disciplines. If obstruction comes, it must redouble your effort, rather die than give up. The greater the trouble, the greater should be our determination and our will. We should not be weaklings.

'If, before we pass away, we are able to know the Truth, we attain

to the goal of our life. If we fail to do this, everything is to no purpose. We miss the object of our life.'

'By realizing the same Divine in all beings, the person of steady intellect attains to the state of immortality.'

'If there be God, what else is there that matters? If there be no God, what does life matter?' (Swami Vivekananda)

First of all, the ideal is to be fixed once for all. There must be no vacillating—no two ways. If we are side-tracked, at once let us fix again the ideal. There must be no 'I may do this or that.' No. 'I can do this only and nothing but this.' This alone is the attitude of the sincere aspirant.

'O Lord, I have made Thee the pole-star of my life. In this ocean of existence I shall not lose my way if I have my mind fixed on Thee.'

The compass, even the best and most modern one, may fail. The pole-star never fails.

## VII

India does not believe in arms and ammunitions. She believes in knowledge and wisdom. With her, knowledge is power, and love is the one weapon which alone is necessary to conquer the whole world, to win over the hearts of the whole of humanity. India stands for cultural and not for political conquest. Learn to be men. Be men, true men, not animals wallowing in the mire of sensuality and greed, but men of love and reverence, of wisdom, knowledge, purity, and non-attachment.

The sum and end of life is freedom and fearlessness, freedom from the ever recurrent bondage of births and

deaths, freedom of the soul from the toils, and the ultimate and final attainment of peace. The knowledge of the Self is the way to freedom and the discovery of Truth, and at the very end of the journey the reward is peace, that peace of which Christ taught that it passeth all understanding.

### VIII

If we find that all our life we remain in a certain stage, there is something seriously wrong. We should always see whether as a result of our Sadhana we are making spiritual progress or not.

We should not be like the musk-deer. It has the musk in its own navel, and in certain seasons it goes mad and runs and runs just to find the source of the sweet fragrance, and then it finally falls down dead. Similarly the God we seek dwells eternally in our hearts, but we want to find Him outside.

'Fire is the God of the twice-born; to the seer God dwells in his own heart; people of poor understanding take up idols as their gods, and one who is same-sighted finds God everywhere.'—*Uttara gita*.

We are always creating our own God or our own gods. We try to create God Mahadeva, and it turns out to be an ugly monkey. We make an image, and then it proves to be the image of an ugly monkey. If we do not know the right idea and also how to apply it to life, everything becomes an ugly monkey. This is the danger.

'For one who attains to salvation worship of images is a hindrance and brings about rebirth. Therefore the man of renunciation should worship the God Who dwells in his own heart.

He should give up all external worship.'—*Maitreyayupanishad*, II: 26.

These higher forms of spiritual practice are only meant for advanced souls. It is all just like a staircase. We must proceed step by step. We must find out where we are, otherwise progress is not possible, never.

So Sankara says, 'Even for learning how to steal, a teacher is necessary.'

The voice of God, of which so many people speak, can only be heard by those who have a completely purified mind, never by others. There is very often great self-deception, because there are impulses of the lower mind. Very often we take our impulses to be the voice of conscience, but really then the ego speaks, not God. When you want to hear the voice of God, stand aside as the witness, dissociate yourself from your body and your mind. If you do not, you cannot hear the voice.

Above all one must stress morals, purification, and sublimation. 'The pure in heart shall see God.'

### IX

'Let only those works be done by thee that are free from blemishes, and not others.'

Narada says, 'Shun by every means the company of the wicked for it will only breed in you desire and anger, delusion and forgetfulness, unreason and death. These grow in the company of the wicked as rapidly as the ripple swells into a tide. Who is the man that frees himself from the snare of the world? The man who shuns the wicked and seeks the wise, and who is free from attachments. The man who loves solitudes and snaps the bonds of the world.

The man who goes beyond the Gunas and gives up to God all that he owns. The man who first abandons the fruits of his actions and then even the actions themselves, for the sake of God, and who passes beyond both good and evil. The man who leaves even the Scriptures behind and loves God without a break. Such a man saves himself, he saves others as well.'

Always keep impure people at a safe distance during the period of your training. Never become intimate with them. There are so many different kinds of lust, specially with regard to women: impure thoughts, glances, speaking of women, touching women. All these must be annihilated in their root-forms in you. Throw away all human dolls without mercy. Burn all your desires in your heart, but then see that you do not take up new dolls again. See only *MOTHER* and *SISTER* in every woman you meet, but so long as you are not yet fully established in dispassion and non-attachment, do even that at a distance. The same holds good in the case of women with reference to man.

*Question:* Should they be stressed from the very beginning? I have observed that most people who just begin to be a little interested are scared away at once as soon as they are told to practise Brahmacharya. Must one raise this demand at once?

*Answer:* Yes. At the very beginning. None is a child of Sri Ramakrishna who is not prepared to pay the price of Brahmacharya. Brahmacharya is one of the most important and essential points. It does not matter if such people are scared away. We do not count the number of people, but their quality. We only

want those who are prepared to pay the full price unconditionally. Others cannot follow spiritual life or the seers of Vedanta or any other Great One. None is a Christian who is not prepared to fulfil all this. Everyone who revolts against sense-control and Brahmacharya should not take to any form of spiritual life. Above all, do not soil the holy name of Christ and Sri Ramakrishna with such people. And you in the West need Brahmacharya even much more than we do. You can never separate sex from brutality.

*Question:* And what about householders who feel interested in the message? You cannot expect Brahmacharya of a householder.

*Answer:* The householder has to practise control just as all the others. Just look at Naga Mahasaya. His father forced him to marry even twice, but he never had any marital relations in all his life. Your idea of marriage is so coarse. Both the wives of Naga Mahasaya became his disciples, leading a life of the highest purity and devotion. So you see, outwardly, Naga Mahasaya was a householder all his life, but there has never been a monk who was purer and less attached than he.

*Question:* And if one party revolts?

*Answer:* None is allowed to be prevented from following the spiritual path by his partner, even if the heart of that person breaks. About that we have already had many talks as you know. A person who becomes an impediment to another with regard to spirituality, is so low, so sense-bound, so egotistic, so brutish in all his emotions and feelings, that he can boldly be pushed aside, whatever may happen. God save me from all such emotional people. If you

belong to them I should leave this place to-morrow morning. Certainly. Such people are not fit to become children of Christ or of Sri Ramakrishna, because both represent the ideal of the very highest purity and non-attachment.

Even in worldly life you need a very strong backbone, if you wish to achieve anything; but in spiritual life you need, as it were, a worldly backbone, a moral backbone, and a very strong spiritual backbone. You need infinitely more strength and manliness than you ever do in ordinary life.

It is very essential for the beginner to have an outward or a mental idol on which to centre all his thoughts and emotions. If you do not have this, you are bound to cling to some other human being, making it your idol and getting entangled in its meshes. Then you believe that some other human personality can fill you, but this only leads you further and further away from the goal.

*Question:* How to avoid old associations rising in the mind?

*Answer:* First of all learn to avoid all people that may tend to rouse them in you. You must mercilessly cut yourself away from them all for a long time to come. You should

avoid as poison anything that may awaken impure memories in your mind. As I said, the moment anybody or any thing stands in the way of your spiritual progress, push them mercilessly aside. There is no other way if you desire to progress and go through the process of purification. Whose fault is it, if we have been careless in our life? Now we have to pay the price, and we shall not go free before having paid the very last farthing.

'In the darkness that surrounds us on all sides, do Thou, O Lord, just rise like the sun and dispel it all with Thy light Divine.'

'Shiva is my mother, Shiva is my father, Shiva is my Lord, Shiva is my friend, Shiva is my play-fellow. Shiva is my all in all. I know none else, I know none else. No, not I.'

'O Lord, you have assumed many names, and endowed them all with your full powers; there is also no particular time for remembering your names, such is your mercy. Yet such is my misfortune that I have no love for your names.'

'The glory of God is best sung by him who is humbler than a straw, more forbearing than a tree, and who does not honour himself but gives honour to others.'

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

## A FEW THOUGHTS ON SORROW

OF the various perplexing problems on the solution of which man from time immemorial has bestowed his thoughts there is none so great as the one of the existence of sorrow in the world. It is the common experience of all of us that at one time or other we have had to taste the bitter cup

of misery of some sort or other. It might be the death of a near relative, or a dear friend, or some keen disappointment. It might be even a national calamity like that of a great war or a disastrous earthquake. To ordinary mortals death seems a grim tragedy. Deprivation in any form

is a great calamity. Disappointment is always an awful affair. Doubts then begin to cross our minds. In this universe which is the handwork of a Merciful Providence why should sorrow, misery, destitution, or disappointment exist? Does God send us sorrow in great anger or utter callousness? Does He glorify Himself in our misery? That is the riddle. Of course, Yogis like the Buddha who have triumphed over death itself, view the existence of sorrow from a different angle altogether. Somehow, ordinary man feels that final word has not been said on the whole affair and thereby makes himself more miserable. How then our ancient seers solve the problem?

#### ANCIENT SEERS' ANGLE OF VIEW

They argued that our Merciful Father always presents the cup of misery in all His Wisdom. The great Physician prescribes this tonic for our spiritual health. Sorrow tones up our *sukshmasarira*—Subtle Body. Sorrow is a great purifier of the soul. Misery gives us mental discipline. It is God's Angel who comes to us with some of the richest gifts. Only we fail to receive them as such and our miseries multiply. If the motto 'that whatever God does is for our good' sinks deep into our soul, perhaps the bitterness would be less.

#### THE MESSAGE OF THE GITA

To view sorrow from this angle means the training of the mind on certain definite lines. Abhyasa and Vairagya—Practice and Non-attachment—are needed. When joy doth not elate us or sorrow doth not make us yield, mental equilibrium results. That is called Samatva. The great-

ness of all great men mainly consisted in this equilibrium. That seems to be the first step of Yoga. When even intellectual giants or the builders of nations lack this mental poise they fall victims to Tamasic Glory and create more misery than welfare. Greed, avarice, lust, and vanity overpower them and make them callous to finer feelings and both individual and national sorrows multiply. It is the Tamasic nature that becomes responsible for human slaughter and other calamities. If in an individual or a nation this Tamasic Guna preponderates how can the blame be laid at the feet of the All-merciful Father? The *Gita* then clearly states that as long as the Tamasic Guna preponderates, there can be no salvation either for an individual or a nation. Ravana whose intelligence was so great as to make him write a big commentary on the Vedas and who built a mighty empire on the sandy foundations of lust, greed, and avarice fell miserably. One Tamasic act on his part was enough to bring misery on himself. Sri Rama, the embodiment of Satvika Guna could crush him, and his mighty empire collapsed like a pack of cards. When the new order is to be evolved out of the present chaos, it seems essential that Satvika Guna should preponderate, both among the individuals and the nations. From that angle the present great calamity may be viewed. The metal will shine brighter when the dross is burnt out. Perchance the merciful Father has ordained that forces of truth, freedom, and justice should ultimately triumph over those of greed, avarice, and vanity. The pangs of the birth or the renewal of these ideals are indeed very great, calling for great

sacrifices on the part of those that deify Satvika Guna. But the self-same Lord has assured us 'My Bhakta will not perish'. In that

great hope let us seek His blessings and wait for the dawn of that great day.

G. A. CHANDAVARKAR

## THE PLACE OF PRAYER IN LIFE

These inspiring reflections on prayer are by **Swami Aseshananda**, Warden, Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Myslapore.—Ed.

PRAYER is a consistent and continuous out-pouring of the devout heart at the feet of the Most High. It unites man with God and leads him from the worldly life to the spiritual life. A life of prayer enables man to establish a personal relationship with God, and enter into close communion with Him. As one proceeds in such a life, one realizes that one's relationship with the Eternal Spirit becomes more and more abiding and tangible, and one's heart gets attuned to the Silence. Such a state must have been in mind when Wordsworth transcribed his feelings and experience in these lines:

'..... that blessed mood,  
In which the burthen of the  
mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary  
weight  
Of all this unintelligible world,  
Is lightened:—that serene and  
blessed mood,  
In which the affections gently lead  
us on,—  
Until, the breath of this corporeal  
frame  
And even the motion of our human  
blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid  
asleep

In body, and become a living soul:  
While with an eye made quiet by  
the power  
Of harmony, and the deep power  
of joy,

We see into the life of things.'

The life of prayer is characterized by complete trust and self-surrender. The devotee lays bare his heart quite confidently before his beloved Master. He is overwhelmed with a sense of lowliness and his shortcomings, and implores divine forgiveness and grace. Like a child that clings to the breast of the mother, or a fledgling that attaches itself to its nest, he holds on to God under all storm and stress of life. Nestling at the bosom of the Divine he forgets all pain, all anxiety.

The pilgrim who sets out on the path of prayer is often assailed by exacting difficulties. His path is by no means a roseate one. He denies all external help and relief from human sources and prays to God only for strength and courage. He is satisfied by doing his best and leaves everything in the hands of God. He thinks that it is heavenly to be with God and suffer. Hence suffering loses all its sting for him. He plunges himself into his spiritual struggle with full hope and never looks behind or wavers.

The very fact of addressing God is proof enough to show that there is

a Being higher than man and to Whom he can turn when he needs—when the pleasures of the world have become insipid for him. His vision becomes more and more clear and he finds that there is a God who cares for him and answers to his calls. Through the clouds of suffering he sees that there is a heart that is more sympathetic than all hearts of the world. At this stage his prayer loses its mechanical character. He has no more relish for set prayers and their repetitions. Doctrines and dogmas no more entangle his attention. His solemn and deep prayers are but the deepest longings of his heart. Gradually all comforts that the world could give appear to him insignificant before the divine rapture which becomes his possession. His heart is emptied of all earthly things because he knows that his Beloved will not enter that shrine if He finds it already occupied. He becomes filled with divine light.

But this state of bliss and illumination can be reached only after a proper cultivation of faith. Faith is a great constructive force and is ever purifying. One filled with a genuine spirit of prayer looks upon the world as a school where God, as the chief organizer, allows each scholar to proceed in his self-education in the light of experience gathered from life. This Supreme Teacher does not stifle the initiative of, or pamper, anybody. To every one the way is a free choice; but He helps each according to his own inclinations. If man is the true soldier of God, he straight obeys His commands; and like Mahavira holds himself ready to sacrifice everything for the Master. Such an attitude of mind is the natural outcome of a genuine life of prayer.

The great poet Tennyson put in the mouth of his hero the following lines, describing the efficacy of prayer:

'..... More things are wrought by prayer

Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and day.

For what are men better than sheep or goats

That nourish a blind life within the brain,

If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer

Both for themselves and who call them friend?"

Lives of great men are often moulded by the power of prayer. The inner spring of Christ's spiritual life was embedded in the rock of prayer. Through prayer he came to know of himself as the son of God. Buddha attained enlightenment and discovered the path of Nirvana through prayer. Even a great political leader, Mahatma Gandhi, works wonders through timely application of prayer. This great apostle of non-violence, the political saint of our own day, never misses a day without prayer. He writes in one of his letters: 'Prayer has been the saving of my life. Without it I should have been a lunatic long ago. My autobiography will tell you that I have had my fair share of the bitterest public and private experiences. They threw me into temporary despair, but if I was able to get rid of it, it was because of prayer. Now I may tell you, that prayer has not been part of my life in the sense that truth has been. It came out of sheer necessity, as I found myself in a plight when I could not possibly be happy without it. And the more my faith in God



increased, the more irresistible became the yearning for prayer. Life seemed to be dull and vacant without it. I had attended the Christian service in South Africa, but it had failed to grip me. I could not join them in prayer.' They supplicated God, but I could not do so; I failed egregiously. I started with disbelief in God and prayer, and until at a later stage in life I did not feel anything like a void in life. But at that stage I felt that as food was indispensable for the body, so was prayer indispensable for the soul. In fact, food for the body is not so necessary as prayer

for the soul. For starvation is often necessary in order to keep the body in health, but there is no such thing as prayer-starvation. You cannot possibly have a surfeit of prayer.'

I may conclude these reflections on prayer and its importance in the life of all who seek light by the following invigorating and soul-stirring Upanishadic prayer: 'From unreality lead me to reality; from darkness lead me to light; from death lead me to immortality. Let Thy presence, O Lord, fill our hearts. Let peace and good-will attend on all.'

SWAMI ASESHANANDA

## THE UPADESASAHASRI

**The Upadesasahasri** (or One Thousand Teachings) is an invaluable handbook of Advaita Philosophy. The first part of it is in prose. The second part is metrical and comprises 671 verses (according to the Vani Vilas Edition, and 675 verses according to the Bibliotheca Sanskrita and Nirnaya Sagar Editions) divided under nineteen topics of widely varying lengths. The verses are mostly in *anushtup*, though there are some other metres having a greater number of syllables also. A few of these can be traced in a minor Upanishad from where they are probably a borrowing. Traditionally the whole work is attributed to **Sri Sankarā Bhagavatpada**. His illustrious disciple Suresvaracharya has quoted some verses in his *Naishkarmyasiddhi* and *Brihadaranyakavartika*. Regarding the prose part too it can be said that there is nothing that does not comport well with the style, spirit, and ideas of the great Acharya although it may

not be as polished and perspicuous as his Bhashyas. Sri Vedantadesika, a great Vaishnava leader of the 14th century, knew the prose part also to be the work of Sri Sankara as is evident from his *Satadushani*. It may therefore be asserted without hesitation that the entire work is by Sri Sankaracharya as tradition also invariably supports it. The prose part of the book is divided into three sections, the first of which deals with the qualifications of the guru and the disciple, the Advaitic doctrine of the identity of Self with Brahman, and the necessity of renunciation for liberation. The second section is argumentative, and establishes with appropriate reasoning the witness nature of Atman, the Supreme Reality, according to the system. The last section emphasizes the practical method of gaining the intuition of the Atman. We are not aware of the existence of an English rendering of this important work. We hope therefore

the translation by **Swami Jagadananda** will remove the long-felt want. The first section of the prose part bearing the title 'A Method of Instructing the disciple' is printed in this issue.—Ed.

We shall now expound for the benefit of persons who aspire after liberation, who have faith in the doctrine taught here, and who ask for it, a method of teaching the requisite means of liberation. This means of liberation is Jnana—Knowledge of Atman—which a guru (preceptor) should explain to a disciple again and again until it is thoroughly grasped by him. The disciple is one who has become indifferent to everything transitory and achievable by the adoption of appropriate means; who has given up the desire for progeny, wealth, and the worlds attainable through them; who has entered the holy order of the Paramahansa (a Sannyasin of the fourth and the highest order); who is endowed with tranquillity, self-restraint, compassion, and so forth<sup>1</sup>; who possesses the qualities enjoined on the disciple by the Scriptures; who is a pure Brahmana; who has approached the preceptor in the prescribed manner; and who has been examined in respect of his birth, vocation, conduct, learning, and parentage.

This is confirmed by the Sruti (Revealed Scripture) texts 'Having examined the worlds ... knowledge of Brahman'—*Mundakopanishad*, I. II: 12 & 13. For knowledge, when it has been thoroughly grasped, conduces to one's own good and turns out to be

a favour done to others, as it gets transmitted from generation to generation, just as a boat available for one who wants to cross a river. The Scripture (*Cchandogyopanishad*, III. II: 6.) says: 'Were one to give this sea-girt earth with all its treasures (in exchange of this knowledge) the latter surely is a greater gift.' In default of such transmission, attainment of knowledge would be impossible. Sruti texts such as 'One who has a teacher knows (Brahman)'<sup>2</sup>, 'For knowledge received from the teacher alone (becomes perfect)'<sup>3</sup>, 'Here, it is said, the teacher is his pilot and right knowledge is the boat'<sup>4</sup>, and passages from Smriti (Traditional Code) like 'The wise who have seen the Truth will teach you the knowledge'<sup>5</sup>, also declare the same truth.

When the guru has inferred from signs that knowledge has not been received by the disciple, let him remove its causes such as transgression of moral and religious laws in the past, heedless conduct in the present life, failure to learn very well the distinction between what is real and what is not, anxiety for the right and wrong behaviour of other people,<sup>6</sup> and pride of birth and the like,<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Cchandogyopanishad*, VI: 14.2;

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, IV: 9.3.

<sup>4</sup> The following parallel passage occurs in, *Mahabharata*, 'Mokshadharma'; *Guruh plavayita tasya jnanam plava iho'chyate Vijnaya kritakriyas tu tinas tad ubhayam tyajet*. The source of the quoted Sruti is unknown.

<sup>5</sup> *Bhagavadgita*, IV: 34.

<sup>6</sup> Or to behave in a manner agreeable to them in order to be esteemed and respected by them. (R)

<sup>7</sup> Family, learning, etc. (R.)

<sup>1</sup> and so forth' refers to discontinuance of religious works, patience in suffering, faith, and concentration of mind.—Ramathitha's gloss.

with the help of remedies ordained by Sruti and Smriti texts, namely, the acquisition of moral qualities like freedom from anger, cultivation of non-violence, and so forth<sup>8</sup>, as well as, religious observances that are not inconsistent with knowledge. Let him also inculcate upon the disciple virtues that aid knowledge; for instance, absence of pride and others taught in the *Bhagavadgita*, XVIII: 8-11.

And the disciple should approach such an accomplished preceptor alone who can foresee his difficulties (or, convince him by new arguments); who is able to counteract the possible ways of misapprehension (or, is able to refute the views contrary to the doctrine); who is quick in grasping the disciple's objections and remembering them (till they are disposed off with appropriate answers after due discrimination); who is tranquil, self-controlled, compassionate, and prompted by purely humane considerations, and so forth;<sup>9</sup> who has learnt the Scriptures duly (from a teacher); who has no clinging to enjoyments of this world or other unseen worlds; who has renounced all means and conditions of religious ceremonies and temporal works (like wealth, household, sacred thread, and so forth); who is a knower of, and established in, Brahman; who never violates the rules of good conduct; who is clean of evils like ostentation, insolence, deception, cruelty, desire to confound others, malice, lying, egotism, selfish-

ness, and the like; who has absolutely no other motive than blessing others; and who seeks to impart to others the Supreme Knowledge (he has attained).

Let the guru, first of all, teach these Sruti texts and similar others bringing out the oneness of the Self:—'Being only, my dear, this was in the beginning, the one only, without a second'<sup>10</sup>, 'Where one sees nothing else ...'<sup>11</sup>, 'All this is the Self'<sup>12</sup>, 'In the beginning all this was Self, the one only'<sup>13</sup>, 'All this, indeed, is Brahman'<sup>14</sup>—and then proceed to define Brahman by the following and similar other texts, which maintain that Paramatman (the Inmost or Supreme Self) transcends phenomenal existence and is identical with the Whole or Brahman, from Sruti texts and Smriti passages that are in agreement with them: 'The Self which is free from sins ...'<sup>15</sup>, 'The Brahman which is present to intuition, not hidden ...'<sup>16</sup>, 'That which transcends hunger and thirst ...'<sup>17</sup>, '... not so, not so ...'<sup>18</sup>, '... neither gross nor subtle ...'<sup>19</sup>, 'This Self is that which has been described as "not this", "not this" ...'<sup>20</sup>, '... never seen but is the witness'<sup>21</sup>, 'Brahman is Knowledge, Bliss ...'<sup>22</sup>, 'Brahman is

<sup>8</sup> Freedom from lust etc., as well as truthfulness, avoiding stealth, continence, and non-possessiveness. (R.)

<sup>9</sup> 'and so forth' Stands for the further qualification that he will not reject the disciple on any account, once he has been granted refuge. (R.)

<sup>10</sup> *Cchandogyopaniṣad*, VI: 2.1;

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, VII: 24.1.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, VII: 25.2.

<sup>13</sup> *Aitareyopaniṣad*, I: 1.1.

<sup>14</sup> *Cchandogyopaniṣad*, VII: 25.2;

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, VIII: 7.1;

<sup>16</sup> *Bṛihadāranyakopaniṣad*, III: 4.1;

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, III: 5.1;

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, II: 3.6;

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, III: 8.8;

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, III: 9.26;

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, III: 8.11;

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, III: 9.27, Verse 7;

Existence, Intelligence, Infinitude' <sup>23</sup>, 'When in that which is invisible, incorporeal, undefined...' <sup>24</sup>, 'He is that great unborn Self' <sup>25</sup>, '(That heavenly Person is) without vital airs and without mind' <sup>26</sup>, 'He is both without and within, not originated' <sup>27</sup>, '...is but pure Intelligence' <sup>28</sup>, '...without interior or exterior...' <sup>29</sup>, 'It is different from the known, It is also above the unknown' <sup>30</sup>, 'That which is called ether...' <sup>31</sup>;—'It is never born, It never dies' <sup>32</sup>, '...nor does the all-pervading Spirit take on the sin or merit of any' <sup>33</sup>, '(As the mighty wind blowing everywhere) ever abides in spacial ether...' <sup>34</sup>, 'And know that I (the Supreme) am the individual Self' <sup>35</sup>, 'It is said to be neither being nor non-being' <sup>36</sup>, 'As the Self is beginningless and devoid of all qualities...' <sup>37</sup>, 'The same in all beings...' <sup>38</sup>, '...the Supreme Person ...' <sup>39</sup>

The preceptor shall ask the disciple who has thus learned from Sruti and Smriti texts the definition of Paramatman, and who is eager to overcome the sea of recurring birth, activities, and death: 'My dear, who are you?'

<sup>23</sup> *Taittiriyaopaniṣad*, II: 1;

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, II: 7;

<sup>25</sup> *Bṛihadaraṇyaka*, IV: 4.22;

<sup>26</sup> *Mundakopaniṣad*, II: 1.2;

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, II: 1.2;

<sup>28</sup> *Bṛihadaraṇyaka*, II: 4.12;

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, II: 5.19;

<sup>30</sup> *Kenopaniṣad*, I: 3;

<sup>31</sup> *Chandogya*, VIII: 14.1;

<sup>32</sup> *Bhagavadgita*, II: 20;

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, V: 5;

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, IX: 6;

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, XIII: 2;

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, XIII: 12;

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, XIII: 31;

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, XIII: 27;

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, XV: 17;

(The sequel is put in the form of a dialogue between the guru and the disciple, In the original it is set forth in the optative form following the ancient method of giving instruction with the force of a command. In the rendering the optative mood is left out to avoid clumsiness. The implication of the command can easily be borne in mind.)

*Disciple*: I am a Brahman's son, descended from so and so; I had been a student—or a householder (if that be the case)—and at present I am a Paramahansa Parivrat (a religious mendicant conforming to specific definitions), intent on liberating myself from the ocean of transmigratory existence infested with the colossal sharks of birth and death.

*Guru*: Since at death your body is pecked by birds or reduced to earth here itself, how is it, my dear, that you entertain the wish to go beyond the round of birth and death? Surely when you are burnt to ashes on the hither bank of the river, you will not cross over to the other bank.

*Disciple*: I am other than the body. Assuredly the body is born and dies; it is consumed by birds and converted to clod; weapons, fire, or other agencies, cause its destruction; it is overtaken by disease, and so forth. As a bird which had been occupying one nest enters another at the destruction of that previous one, so also, I, already occupying one body, like the bird in the nest, pass from that to another, and then to another, and so on, overpowered by the effects of good and evil deeds. In this wise, in the beginningless phenomenal existence I am being whirled in the wheel of continuous birth, activity, and death, like a rope-and-bucket machine used for raising water, by force of the

effect of my past deeds, taking embodiment as divinity, man, animal, and a denizen of hell, and laying aside previous bodies and taking on other fresh ones in succession; finally in this order I have obtained the present body, and being disgusted with this cyclic course of birth and death, I have betaken myself to your holy presence so that I may put an end to this repeated process of transmigration. Hence I am always other than the body; bodies are taken and relinquished just as a man puts on and puts off garments.

*Guru:* Well said; you observe rightly. But how is it that you answered wrongly: 'I am the son of a Brahmana, I belong to such and such lineage, I had been a student or a householder, and I have now entered the order of the Paramahansa'?

*Disciple:* Revered sir, Have I stated wrongly? How is it?

*Guru:* Because you have recognized the body, which is associated with different births, families, and sanctifying ceremonies, to be the Atman (Self) devoid of birth, family, or sanctifying ceremonies by the statement 'I am the son of a Brahmana and come from such and such a lineage'.

*Disciple:* Please explain how the body is related with different births, lineages, and sanctifying ceremonies, and how I am unconnected with them?

*Guru:* Listen, my dear, I shall tell you in what way this body, associated with various births, families, and sanctifying rites, is different from you, and how you are entirely bereft of birth, lineage, and sanctifying ceremonies. You should remember, my dear, that Paramatman (the In-

most Self) is the Self or Essence of all that is, as has been defined to you above in the words of Sruti texts beginning with 'Being alone this was, my dear', and also in the words of Smriti passages; remember also His definition declared by the Sruti and Smriti texts. Atman, the inmost Self of all, (the teacher may continue to instruct the disciple who had been reminded of the definition of the Supreme Self) Who is called ether; Who is an entity other than name and form; Who is characterized as incorporeal, not gross, untouched by sin, and so forth; Who is not the least contaminated by any of the attributes of phenomenal existence; Who is Brahman present to intuition, not hidden; Who is the Spirit indwelling the entire sentient and non-sentient world; Who witnesses, hears, reflects, and cognizes, but is never the object of sight, hearing, reflection, or cognition; Whose true nature is permanent Consciousness; Who is pure knowledge itself without interior or exterior; Who has filled everywhere like the spacial ether; Whose power is infinite; Who is the Self of all; Who is beyond hunger, thirst, and the rest; and Who is ever manifest—He, by His mere existence, by means of His incomprehensible potencies, develops name and form which had been latent in Him; which are altogether different from Himself in their nature; which are the germ of the universe; which have no basis other than Himself, and yet cannot be defined whether they are He Himself or different from Him; and which constitute the objects of His cognition. These, name and form (or thoughts and things), which were not manifest before, and which were manifested subsequently, proceeded

from the Atman, described above, and became the name and form of spacial ether. And that primordial cosmic constituent (or great element), called ether, rose from the Paramatman in the manner stated just now, as foam, which is an impurity, emerges from pure, limpid water. Foam is not water, nor is it wholly different from it; for it is not to be found where there is no water. On the other hand, clear water is quite different from foam which is but an impurity. Similarly, the pure, serene, Supreme Self is quite other than name and form which take the place of foam in the illustration. It is the name and form, comparable to foam, which became what is designated as ether and its form, when it developed from a previous unmanifested state to a subsequent manifested one. Name and form evolving into grosser and grosser states in progressive order, the succeeding one springing from the preceding one, became the essential air, fire, water, and earth; and in the same order of succession, by the inter-penetration of the preceding ones into the succeeding ones, the five cosmic constituents down to earth were produced; and hence the earth is endowed with the qualities of all the five. Herbs, such as paddy and barley, are produced from earth compounded of all the five cosmic constituents. From them, eaten by man as food, is generated Lohita (egg) and Sukla (sperm) in the female and male bodies, which, as a result of the instinct of sex being aroused by Avidya or nescience, is brought out, sanctified by sacred utterances, and scattered in the womb, at the time of menstruation. Growing by the ingress of the secretions of the mother's body, what had been an

embryo develops into a child, and is delivered in the ninth or tenth month. What is born has now received a name and a form, and it is sanctified by means of sacred formulas employed at the performance of the specific rites occasioned by the birth, and so forth. Sanctified, again, by the investiture of the Yajnopavita (sacred thread) at the commencement of Studentship, that receives the designation of a Brahmacharin. The same body is called a householder when it undergoes the sanctifying rite concomitant with marriage. That again receives the name of a hermit dwelling in the forest by virtue of the ceremonies attendant upon its entry into that stage of life. Once more that itself comes to possess the name of a Parivart, wandering Sannyasi, by undergoing the ceremonies leading to a cessation from works enjoined by the Scriptures. The body associated with various births, families, and sanctifying rites, is thus different from you. That the essential nature of the mind and the senses is also but name and form is known from Sruti texts such as: 'Mind, my dear, is derived from food'.<sup>40</sup>

And now as to the question: How is that I am different from birth, family, and sanctifying rites? the reply is this: The same One, Who is the cause of the unfoldment of name and form, Whose characteristics are different from that of name and form, and Who is devoid of all connection with sanctifying ceremonies, having evolved name and form, created this body, and Himself entered into it (which is but a name and a form) Himself seeing though unseen by others, Himself hearing without being

<sup>40</sup> *Cchandogya*, VI: 6.5;

heard, Himself reflecting without being reflected upon, Himself cognizing without being cognized—as stated in the text, 'The Wise One Who having divided all forms and having given all names, remains speaking with those names.'<sup>41</sup> There are numerous Sruti texts conveying the same meaning; for instance 'Having created, He even entered it'<sup>42</sup>, 'He is the Ruler who has entered into all creatures'<sup>43</sup>, 'This Self has entered into these bodies'<sup>44</sup>, 'This is your Self'<sup>45</sup>, 'Opening the suture of the skull he got in by that door'<sup>46</sup>, 'This Self is concealed in all beings'<sup>47</sup>, 'That Divinity (i.e., that which had produced fire, water, and earth) thought, "Let me now enter into these three beings"'<sup>48</sup>. Smriti texts too elucidate the same truth, for example: 'Self alone is all Gods'<sup>49</sup>, 'Self in the city of nine gates...'<sup>50</sup>, 'Know the individual Self to be Myself (Supreme Being)'<sup>51</sup>, 'The same in all beings...'<sup>52</sup>, 'The witness and approver...'<sup>53</sup>, 'The Supreme Person is another...'<sup>54</sup>, 'Residing in all bodies but Itself devoid of any...'<sup>55</sup> and so forth. Therefore it is established that you are not related with

birth, family, and sanctifying ceremonies.

*Disciple*: I, a transmigratory soul subjected to ignorance, happiness, and misery, am one, He, the Divinity transcending phenomenal existence and entirely different from me in nature, is quite another; and I am harbouring the eager wish to cross the ocean of birth and death by worshipping and bowing down to Him, by making oblations and offerings to Him, by observing the duties pertaining to my class and stage of life, and by similar other possible means. I am He himself!—how can that be?

*Guru*: You ought not, my dear, to regard it so; because a doctrine of difference is forbidden (in the Scriptures). If it is urged why it is so, in answer the following and other Sruti texts may be cited: 'He who worships another god thinking, "He is one, and I am another" does not know'<sup>56</sup>, 'The Brahman ousts one who knows Him as different from the Self'<sup>57</sup>, 'He goes from death to death who sees difference, as it were, in It'<sup>58</sup>. And these very Srutis show that continuation of transmigratory existence is the result of accepting difference. That, on the otherhand, liberation results only by ceasing to perceive difference is borne out by a multitude of Sruti texts; for example, the statements 'That is the Self, Thou art That'<sup>59</sup>, 'A man who has a teacher knows Brahman'<sup>60</sup>, and that 'A knower of Brahman has to wait only so long as he is not merged

<sup>41</sup> *Taittiriyananyaka*, III: 12.7;

<sup>42</sup> *Taittiriyanishad*, II: 6;...

<sup>43</sup> *Taittiriyananyaka*, III: 11. 1, 2;

<sup>44</sup> *Brihadaranyak.*, I: 4.7;

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, III: 4.1;

<sup>46</sup> *Aitareyanishad*, I: 3.12;

<sup>47</sup> *Kathopanishad*, I: 3.12;

<sup>48</sup> *Cchandogya*, VI: 3.12;

<sup>49</sup> Source untraced;

<sup>50</sup> *Bhagavadgita*, V: 13;

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, XIII: 2;

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, XIII: 27;

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, XIII: 22;

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, XV: 17;

<sup>55</sup> *Katha*, II: 22; but Smriti source unknown.

<sup>56</sup> *Brihadaranyak.*, I: 4.10;

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, II: 4.6 & IV: 5.7;

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, IV: 4.19;

<sup>59</sup> *Cchandogya*, VI: 13.3;

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, VI: 14.2;

in Brahman '<sup>61</sup>, assert that the individual Self is no other than Brahman. That transmigratory existence comes to an absolute cessation in the case of one who is prompted by the truth that there is no difference, is illustrated by the example of one who was not a thief and who did not get burnt (by grasping a heated hatchet). The person who is prompted by the false notion that difference is true, as he perceives difference, continues to be in mundane condition; this is illustrated by the example of the thief who got burnt. The text commencing with 'Whatever these creatures are here, whether a tiger...' <sup>62</sup>, after asserting that by perceiving non-difference 'he becomes Svarat or Brahman' <sup>63</sup>, proceeds to state in the sequel that by the perception of difference, on the contrary, one goes the round of birth, activity, and death, as corroborated by the text 'But those who think differently from this live in perishable regions and have other beings for their rulers.' <sup>64</sup> Such statements are found in every branch of the Veda. It was therefore certainly wrong on your part to have stated that you are the son of a Brahmana, that you belong to such and such a family, that you are subjected to transmigration, and that you are quite different from the Supreme Self.

That being so, perception of difference is forbidden with reason; performance of religious and temporal works have scope only so long as there is the perception of difference; Yajnopavita and the rest are accessories of religious work; it must,

therefore, be understood that on the attainment of identity with Paramatman one is debarred from the accessories imposed by religious works; for religious works and their accessories such as Yajnopavita and the rest go counter to the perception of identity with Paramatman. Only those who are still bound to the conditions of earthly life are commanded to perform sacrificial duties and to have Yajnopavita and the rest, and not one who does not behold himself to be other than the Supreme Self; and (even in respect of the former) a distinction from Paramatman (which affords the ground for the performance of religious and temporal works) is true only in as much as he perceives himself to be different from Him.

If religious works were obligatory and if they were not to be discontinued, the Sruti would neither have declared the identity of one's Self with the Supreme Self, unrelated to the means of religious works and their conditions such as class and stage in social life, in unambiguous sentences such as 'That is the Self, thou art That' <sup>65</sup>, nor would it have disparaged the perception of difference in clauses such as the following and others: 'This is the eternal glory of a knower of Brahman' <sup>66</sup>, '...untouched by good work and untouched by evil work' <sup>67</sup>, and 'Here a thief becomes no thief' <sup>68</sup>.

If religious and temporal works and their accessories, Yajnopavita and the like, were not desired to have been renounced, it would not have been stated that the essential nature of the Self is in no way connected

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, VI: 14.2;

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, VI: 9.3;

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, VII: 25.2;

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, VII: 25.2;

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, VI: 8.7;

<sup>66</sup> *Brihadaranyak.*, IV: 4.23;

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, IV: 3.22;

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, IV: 3.22;



with religious works and conditions required by them such as a particular social class and the rest. Hence it follows that religious and temporal works, together with their accessories, must be laid aside by one who is eager for liberation, as they are not in agreement with the realization of identity with Paramatman. It must, therefore, be acknowledged that the individual Self is none other than the Supreme Self defined in the Sruti in the aforesaid manner.

*Disciple:* Revered sir, I directly perceive the painful sensation when the body is being burned or wounded; and the misery caused by hunger and the like, too, is directly perceived. It is mentioned in all Srutis and Smritis that this Supreme Self is beyond sin, free from old age, from death and grief, from hunger and thirst, and without any smell or taste. How can I, so entirely different from the Supreme Self and possessing several phenomenal attributes, possibly accept the Paramatman to be the Atman, and myself, a poor transmigratory being, to be the Paramatman? I may, then, very well admit that fire is cool! Being one in the realm of birth, and death, and consequently entitled to accomplish all prosperity in this world and in the next, as well as the supreme end of life (i.e., liberation), how can I discard sacrificial duties that bring about these results and their requisite conditions such as Yajnopavita and the like?

*Guru:* You have stated that when the body is subjected to heat, or wounded, you perceive pain directly; that is not true. Why? One perceives the painful sensation, caused by burning or cutting, in the object of perception, namely, the burn or the cut in the body which is quite

another like the tree burnt or cut. So burning and the rest and the sensation of pain produced by them have their location in the same place. Only where a burn or cut is made, people point out the pain caused by them, and not in the perceiver of those sensations. To explain: when one is asked where is your pain, one replies: The pain is in my head, or on the chest, or in the stomach. Where there is the burning sensation and the rest,—to that place alone he points out, and not to the perceiver of those sensations. If either the pain or its causes, such as burn, were in the perceiver, one would have pointed out to him in order to locate them, just as he would point out to the body where the burning was caused.

The Self, i.e., the perceiver, cannot be perceived even as the colour of the eye is not seen by the same eye. Hence, as burn, cut, and the rest, and sensation of pain, are perceived to co-exist at the same place, it follows that the latter also is only an object like the former; and since it is of the nature of an activity, like the cooking of rice, it must have a basis to abide. Reminiscent impressions of pain have the same substratum as that of the sensation of pain for the reason that they are perceived only at a time when memory is possible, i.e., when one is awake and is not in deep sleep. The aversion regarding the sensation of 'pain and its causes also have the same basis as that of reminiscent impressions. There is an old authority testifying to this fact: 'Attachment, aversion, and fear have the same locus as that of reminiscent impression; they are apprehended in the intellect; therefore the cognizing Self is ever pure and

fearless.' (*Vide*, Metrical Part, Topic, 15: verse, 13).

The question may arise here: What then is the locus of the reminiscent impressions and so forth, and colour and the rest? To this the reply is given: The same as that of desire and the rest. If it is further enquired where desire and the rest are located, it must be known on the strength of the Sruti text 'Desire, deliberation, doubt...' <sup>69</sup> that they are in the intellect and nowhere else. Reminiscent impressions and the rest, as well as colour and the like, also have their bases in that itself, as it is declared in the Sruti—'On what do colours rest?—On the heart (intellect).' <sup>70</sup> Thus it is evident from a collection of Sruti Texts, such as, '...desires that dwell in his heart...' <sup>71</sup>, '...for he is then beyond all the woes of his heart...' <sup>72</sup>, '...(for this Infinite Being) is then unattached' <sup>73</sup> 'That is His form—beyond desires' <sup>74</sup>; and Smriti passages like 'It is said to be changeless' <sup>75</sup>, '...because it is beginningless and without attributes' <sup>76</sup>—which declare that like, dislike, and so forth, are the attributes of the embodiment and not of the embodied Self;—that impurity pertains to the object and not to the subjective Self. Because you are not contaminated by colour and so forth, and reminiscent impressions and the rest, and because there is no conflict with the means of valid knowledge such as perception, therefore you are

not other than the Supreme Self; and it is also reasonable to acknowledge: I am the Supreme Self and none else.

The following Sruti and Smriti texts establish that you are Atman, the one only, to wit, the Supreme Reality entirely free from every phenomenal attribute:—'It knew only Itself as "I am Brahman"' <sup>77</sup>, 'It should be realized in one form only' <sup>78</sup>, 'I alone am below' <sup>79</sup>, 'Self alone is below' <sup>80</sup>, 'He sees all as the Self' <sup>81</sup>, ...but when to the knower of Brahman everything has become the Self... <sup>82</sup>, 'This all are the Self' <sup>83</sup>, 'He is, then without parts' <sup>84</sup>, '...without interior or exterior...' <sup>85</sup>, '...He is both without and within, not originated' <sup>86</sup>, 'Brahman alone is all this' <sup>87</sup>, '...It entered through that door...' <sup>88</sup>, 'All these are but different names of the Intelligence', 'Brahman is Existence, Intelligence, Infinitude' <sup>89</sup>, 'From It...' <sup>90</sup>, '...having created it, even He entered it' <sup>91</sup>, 'He is the one God hidden in all beings, all-pervading...' <sup>92</sup>, '...bodiless within the bodies...' <sup>93</sup>, '...(the knowing Self) is not born, It does not die' <sup>94</sup>,

<sup>77</sup> *Brihadaranyak.*, I: 4.10;

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, IV: 4.20;

<sup>79</sup> *Cchandogya.*, VII: 25.1;

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, VII: 25.2;

<sup>81</sup> *Brihadaranyak.*, IV: 4.23;

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, II: 4.14;

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, II: 4.6 & IV: 5.7;

<sup>84</sup> *Prasnopanishad*, VI: 5;

<sup>85</sup> *Brihadaranyak.*, II: 5.19;

<sup>86</sup> *Mundakopanisad*, II: 1.2;

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, II: 2.11 and *Br.*, IV: 5.19;

<sup>88</sup> *Aitareyop.*, I: 3.12;

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*, III: 1.2;

<sup>90</sup> *Taittiriop.*, II: 1.1;

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, II: 1.1;

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, II: 1.6;

<sup>93</sup> *Svetasvataropanisad*, VI: 11;

<sup>94</sup> *Kathop.*, I: 2.22;

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, I: 2.18;

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, I: 5.3;

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, III: 9.20;

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, IV: 4.7;

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, IV: 3.22

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, IV: 3.16;

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, IV: 3.21;

<sup>75</sup> *Bhagavadgita*, II: 25;

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, XIII:31;

'...in dream and in waking...' <sup>96</sup>,  
 '...this is my Self, thus let one  
 know' <sup>97</sup>, '...Who knows all beings  
 ...' <sup>98</sup>, 'It moves, and It moves  
 not' <sup>99</sup>, 'Knowing It, one becomes  
 worthy of being worshipped' <sup>100</sup>, 'It,  
 and nothing but It, is fire' <sup>101</sup>, 'I  
 was Manu and the Sun' <sup>102</sup>, 'The  
 Ruler who has entered into beings  
 ...' <sup>103</sup>, 'Existence only, my dear  
 ...' <sup>104</sup>, 'That is the true, That is  
 the Self, and Thou art That' <sup>105</sup>, 'All  
 living creatures are the dwelling of  
 Him who lies enveloped in mat-  
 ter' <sup>106</sup>, 'The Self alone is all  
 gods' <sup>107</sup>, 'In the city of nine  
 gates...' <sup>108</sup>, '...the same in all  
 beings...' <sup>109</sup>, 'In a Brahmana, wise  
 and courteous...' <sup>110</sup>, 'Undivided,  
 as it were, yet dwelling in division  
 ...' <sup>111</sup>, 'Vasudeva is this all...' <sup>112</sup>.

*Disciple:* Revered sir, if the  
 Atman who is without interior or  
 exterior, who is both within and  
 without, who is unoriginated,  
 who is altogether a mass of pure  
 intelligence like a lump of salt,  
 and who is devoid of all the various  
 forms, is of only one tenor, like the  
 spacial ether, what is it that is  
 observed in ordinary usage and

revealed in Scriptures as what is to  
 be accomplished, their appropriate  
 means, and the accomplishers related  
 with the various accomplishments  
 —for they are thoroughly established  
 by Sruti and Smriti texts as well as  
 by ordinary parlance—, and made,  
 subject-matter of contention among  
 a host of rival disputants holding  
 different views?

*Guru:* All that we observe or learn  
 from Srutis—ends realized, means of  
 realization and persons who realize—  
 are products of nescience. But in rea-  
 lity, there is only one, the Atman, who  
 untruly appears more than one, just  
 as the moon appears more than one  
 to a person affected by amaurosis.  
 On the ground of Vedic texts like,  
 "Where there is something else as  
 it were..." <sup>113</sup>, 'Because there is  
 duality as it were...' <sup>114</sup>, 'There one  
 sees another' <sup>115</sup>, 'He goes from  
 death to death...' <sup>116</sup>, 'And where  
 one sees something else, hears some-  
 thing else, cognizes something else,  
 that is the finite...the finite is  
 mortal...' <sup>117</sup>, 'The modification  
 (i.e., the effect) being a name  
 merely, which has its origin in speech  
 ...' <sup>118</sup>, '...Untruth...' <sup>119</sup>, 'He is  
 one and I am another' <sup>120</sup>, which  
 disparage with ample reason the  
 perception of difference; and from  
 texts like, '...one only without a  
 second...' <sup>121</sup>, 'But when to the  
 knower of Brahman...' <sup>122</sup>, 'Where

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, II: 1.4;

<sup>97</sup> *Kaushitakyopanishad*, III: 9;

<sup>98</sup> *Isavasyopanishad*, 5;

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, 6;

<sup>100</sup> *Mahanarayanopanishad*, I: 2.3;

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, I: 3.4;

<sup>102</sup> *Brihadaranyak*, I: 4.10;

<sup>103</sup> *Taittiriyan*, III: 11.1, 2;

<sup>104</sup> *Cchandogyo*, VI: 2.1;

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid*, VI: 8.7;

<sup>106</sup> *Apastambadharmasutra*, I: 8.22.4;

<sup>107</sup> 'Sarva hy atmani devatah' occurs in  
 'Mokshadharma';

<sup>108</sup> *Bhagavadgita*, V: 13;

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid*, XIII: 27;

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid*, V: 1;

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, XIII: 26;

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid*, VII: 19;

<sup>113</sup> *Brihadaranyak*, IV: 3.31;

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid*, II: 4.14;

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, IV: 4.19;

<sup>116</sup> *Cchandogyo*, VII: 24.1;

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid*, VII: 24.1;

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid*, VI: 1.4;

<sup>119</sup> *Brihadaranyak*, IV: 5.15;

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, I: 4.10;

<sup>121</sup> *Cchandogyo*, VI: 2.1;

<sup>122</sup> *Brihadaranyak*, IV: 5.15;

is delusion, where is grief?'<sup>123</sup>, which teach unity, it is clearly learnt that duality (constituting of the perceiver and the perceived) is the offspring of nescience.

*Disciple:* If that be so, why mention is made in the Sruti texts about diverse ends that are sought to be attained, their means, and so forth, as well as origination and dissolution of the universe?

*Guru:* One who is still in the sphere of nescience, who accepts the difference of body and the rest, who considers himself destined to be united with what is approved of and what is disliked, who does not possess the knowledge to distinguish the means of securing what he desires and avoiding what he dislikes, merely with the aid of requisite means, and who is at the same time eager to do so—to remove gradually the ignorance of such a person regarding them is the purport of the Scriptures, and not to enunciate the distinction between means, ends, and so forth; for, that difference constitutes phenomenal existence which is held to be totally undesirable. By demonstrating the conclusion that origination and dissolution and the rest are but One,<sup>124</sup> the Scripture eradicates the

cyclic round of birth, action, and death—in other words, perception of difference or nescience. And when nescience is rooted out with the aid of Sruti, Smriti, and reasoning, the seer of the Supreme Truth becomes firmly and finally established in the one cognition that he is the Supreme Self and none else, who is without interior or exterior, who is within and without, who is unoriginated, who is pure Consciousness like a lump of salt, and who is all-filling like the spacial ether; and quite reasonably then there is not in Him the least taint associated with the difference between ends, means, origination, dissolution, and the rest.

And now those who wish to realize the Supreme Reality must rise above the desire to have sons, wealth and new worlds, and so forth, which are described in a fivefold manner and which are the outcome of the conceit of class and stage in the social order, and so forth; for such conceit is opposed to true Knowledge. It is therefore quite intelligible why the perception of difference is prohibited in the Sruti texts. For when the conviction is generated by verbal testimony and logical reasoning that the one Atman is beyond phenomenal being, there cannot exist side by side with it a knowledge contrary to it. None can think of chillness in fire, or freedom from old age and immortality in regard to the perishable body. The conclusion is therefore settled that one who is established in the intuition of the Supreme Reality shall give up all temporal and sacrificial duties and their accessories like the Yajnopavita and the rest; for their presence can be accounted for only as an effect of nescience.

<sup>123</sup> *Isavasyo*, 7.

<sup>124</sup> The Sruti texts like *Taittiriyaopanishad*. III: 1 which declare about the origination, sustentation and dissolution of the universe have for their purport not merely the satisfaction of the curious who question about the cause of the universe but the laying down of an authoritative teaching to make it clear that the universe is not a thing apart from the One Supreme Identity, that if we could conceive of Him at all it is as the source and stay and rest of the universe, that knowing so one finds that there is no phenomena but the only Reality, and that that realisation confers liberation upon one in whom that knowledge has dawned.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**A Short Life of Sri Ramakrishna:**  
PUBLISHED BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA,  
ADVAITA ASHRAMA, MAYAVATI, ALMORA,  
HIMALAYAS. PRICE 10 AS. PAGES 122.

This little paper-bound volume written in enghteen short sections takes one through the wonderful life of Sri Ramakrishna, exciting interest in, and adoration for, his divine personality from page to page. There are a great many people, especially those belonging to the class that have little leisure, who want the information contained in this volume and who will appreciate the swift simple manner in which it is given. This volume therefore, fulfils a special need which larger volumes which treat of the master's life do not meet. We bid a very large circulation of the book, particularly among the school-going students. This shorter volume cannot fail to whet the appetite of the reader and induce him to search for more comprehensive works on the great life of the Master.

**Bhasa-Pariccheda with Siddhanta-Muktavali:** BY VISWANATH NYAYA-PANCANANA. TRANSLATED BY SWAMI MADHAVANANDA, WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY DR. SATKARI MOOKERJEE, M.A., Ph.D., LECTURER, CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY. PUBLISHED BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA, PRESIDENT, ADVAITA ASHRAMA, MAYAVATI, ALMORA. PRICE Rs. 2-8-0. PAGES 282.

'The *Bhasa-pariccheda* with its commentary the "Siddhanta-muktavali," by the same author, Visvanatha Nyaya-panchanana Bhattacharya, is a manual on the Nyaya-Viseshika philosophy which is extensively read throughout India by all who want to get a fair knowledge of the subject within a short compass. Though intended for beginners, it is a pretty difficult book, the chief reason for which is its extreme terseness.... Those who are not well versed in Sanskrit, an English version of it is sure to be of great help. ....Students of Nyaya, however, should always remember that, no matter how good a translation is, they must be ready to do hard thinking for a proper understanding of the subject.... The book will be of most profit to those who will

go through the "Muktavali" in the original.... But it will be quite helpful to others also. Of the different readings, the one that seemed most appropriate, has been followed. I have tried to make the rendering as literal as possible without being unintelligible. The catchwords of the text quoted in the commentary are taken from the running translation and are given in Italics. The text has been punctuated, and copious notes have been added to elucidate difficult passages. References have been given to most of the quotations. The Index and the Glossary of Sanskrit terms will, it is presumed, be found useful. It is hoped that the book will facilitate the study of Nyaya, and be widely read by the interested public, both in the East and in the West.'—Preface.

'The translation of works of Navya-Nyaya literature into a foreign language is almost an impossible task, and if possible at all, will require Herculean labour. The subtle nuances of the terminological expressions refuse to be rendered into another language. The present translation is a new enterprise, and the author of it, Swami Madhavananda, has achieved considerable success. The translation is accurate and in most places extremely happy. His task has been uphill, because the Muktavali is full of discussions in which the terminology of the New School has been freely used. The special charm of the translation is the studied avoidance of all technicalities of Western philosophy, which makes it intelligible even to a person who is not a student of philosophy. But a translation, however successful, cannot altogether avoid the difficulties of the original, and so the present translation will require as close attention as the original, at any rate in the chapter on inference. The foot-notes, although brief, are felicitous and will help the understanding of the text. It will particularly help the student if he studies the book along with the original, as translation into another language serves to a great extent the purpose of a commentary. The credit of being the pioneer-translator into English in the field of Navya-Nyaya will go to Swami Madhavananda, whose English translation of Sankara's *Bhasya* on the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* and

other philosophical classics has already made his name familiar to the students of Indian philosophy and religion. I can unhesitatingly aver that his English rendering will extend the circle of readers of this important work, and thus will be instrumental in stimulating the interest of students of philosophy in Navya Nyaya—a subject which has remained a sealed book to many and a scarecrow to not a few.'—*Introduction*.

The book is beautifully printed and bound. There is no doubt that it will prove a great help to students of Neo-Logic who

have a better command over English than Sanakrit and who do not possess the desire or profitable patience to undergo the traditional discipline of sitting at the feet of a teacher and following his subtle and intricate enunciations and interpretations with great alertness and persistence, day after day, and month after month.

#### A CORRECTION

In our July issue it was stated that the price of *The Sikh Studies* reviewed in it is Rs. 2. The Publisher informs us that the correct price is Rs. 4.—Ed.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Swami Madhavanandaji's tour in Kerala

Srimat Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, arrived at Trivandrum, on the 6th of June, on a visit to all the Centres of the Math in Kerala. He was received at Trivandrum as a State guest and was accommodated at the Padma Vilas, the quarters for the State guests. On the 7th he addressed a public meeting on the 'Harmony of Faiths'. On the 8th he was given a public address at Sri Chitra Library hall at a meeting held under the auspices of the Kerala Hindu Mission, Dewan Bahadur V. Subramania Iyer, Rtd. Dewan of Travancore, presiding on the occasion. The Swami then visited the Cape Comorin and on the way addressed a meeting under the Hindu Sevak Sangh at Eraniel.

After leaving Trivandrum, he visited Haripad, Tiruvalla, Kottayam, Vaikom, and Kaladi in the Travancore State. He also visited the Math Centres at Trichur in Cochin State and Ottapalam in Malabar District. In all these places he was given public addresses. The one, given at Trivandrum and the Swami's reply are given below:—

To

His Holiness,  
Srimat Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj,  
General Secretary,  
Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

Revered Swamiji,

On this memorable occasion of your first visit to Travancore, as the Secretary of

the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, we, the citizens of Trivandrum who are interested in the Ramakrishna Movement and the good work which it is doing, beg to extend to you a hearty, affectionate, and respectful welcome to this ancient State. Though it is many years since Travancore has been brought within the ambit of the activities of the Ramakrishna Movement, it is only very rarely that senior members of the central organization like your revered self have honoured us with a visit; and, today, we feel it a proud privilege to have the opportunity of welcoming you to our midst.

Stranger though you are to this part of India, your reputation as a sincere, selfless, and devoted worker in the cause of the Ramakrishna Movement has preceded you. After a brilliant academic career, you renounced the prospects of a successful career in the world to join the Ramakrishna Math at Belur in 1910, and after taking to Holy Orders you spent several years in spiritual practices at Benares and Hrishikesh. Subsequently you were the President of the Advaita Ashram, Mayavati, which is the most important publication Centre of the Ramakrishna Movement, and whence is published the *Prabuddha Bharata*, the direction of which was in your able hands for some time. In 1927 you were sent to America as head of the Vedanta Centre at San Francisco, and after a period of hard and ungrudging work for two years, during which you were able to spread the knowledge of Indian culture and Indian philosophy among the peo-

ple of that continent to an extent which greatly rebounds to your credit, and after an extensive tour of Europe, which was equally well-aimed and well-appreciated, you returned to India in 1929 and took up the duties of the Assistant Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission; and eight years later you were appointed General Secretary of the Mission.

We feel it our duty to refer also to the exceedingly good work you have done as the author of several philosophic and Vedantic works while holding onerous posts connected with the Mission. All students of Indian philosophy, both in India and abroad, are especially indebted to you for your able and accurate rendering into English, of *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* and the commentary on it by Sri Sankara. This piece of work, which is the first of its kind, has received the appreciation of all Sanskritists and established for you a permanent reputation in the field of Indian Philosophy. No less important is your latest work, the English translation of *Bhashaparichcheda* and *Muktavali*, the commentary on it.

Thus, Swamiji, renouncing worldly pleasures, you have dedicated your noble life to the service of God and man through the great Order of which you are a distinguished member; and in your life we have come across a glorious example of the monastic ideal, which consists in a harmonious combination of renunciation, service, and scholarship.

We, in Travancore, have long been drawn to the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, and in our own humble way we are endeavouring to propagate those teachings and extend the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission. We must confess, however, that we have not been able to do so to the extent we desire. There are, no doubt, at present several Ramakrishna Ashrams in Travancore, and we may be permitted to point out also, with pardonable pride, that Trivandrum Ashram, by its location, strength, and activities, may claim special importance. Nevertheless, we feel that our achievements fall considerably short of our wishes. It is, however, our earnest hope that, under the guidance and inspiration of the great leaders of the movement like your good self, we may be able to do more.

In conclusion, Swamiji, we beg to repeat our feelings of immense gratification at being afforded this opportunity of greeting you, though we feel that we have not been able to welcome you as we would have wished. May your sojourn in Travancore be happy and fruitful, and may you live long in the service of God and man, achieving, in an ever-increasing measure, those aims and ideals which have drawn you to the Ramakrishna Mission and of which you have already given signal proof.

Yours in Service,  
Trivandrum, We beg to remain,  
9th June, 1940. Revered Swamiji,  
THE CITIZENS OF TRIVANDRUM.

*A brief summary of the Reply  
to the above Address.*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am not presumptuous enough to think that I really deserve the kind words used in the Address you have presented to me, for I am fully aware how far I am from the ideal which actuated me to join this glorious Order. I take it as an appreciation of the good work of the Ramakrishna Mission, the reference to which has touched a tender chord in my heart. I offer your tribute at the feet of our great Masters, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

Friends, I have first to speak of a common misunderstanding. Our work has often been mistaken for social service. But what we really do is to worship the Lord by serving all beings, for the Lord is in all.—‘*Ekam sat vipra bahvutha vadanti*—That which exists is one; sages call it by various names.’ Of course, the nature of the worship differs. We offer Vilva leaves to Siva and Tulasi leaves to Vishnu. No interchange is possible. So also the service rendered differs with the needs of the persons served. Thus food must be given to the hungry, medicine to the sick, education to the illiterate, and so on.

The Mission has been doing work along all these lines according to the area in which it functions and its needs. In the West, for instance, there is no need to open hospitals, educational institutions, and the like, for the Government and the people there are looking to such needs very efficiently. But religious preaching

is necessary there, for the Christian and other Missions do not have those grand ideals of philosophy and spirituality which Hinduism has. We set forth the fundamental principles of all religions which are, more or less, alike—the harmony between all religions and between different denominations of the same religion. As Swami Vivekananda used to say, 'Christianity is only an off-shoot of Hinduism, its Bhakti aspect, and Buddhism a rebel child, a protestation within Hinduism'.

What is needed in India is practical Vedanta. Our philosophy may be very grand, but why have we become degraded for the past thousand years. It is because we have not put those ideas and ideals into practice. Poverty is a chronic disease in India. 'There can be no religion for empty stomachs' says Sri Ramakrishna. Give them food and then, education and spirituality. There has been a cleavage between Paramarthika and Vyavaharika and hence religious truths have not been practised in everyday life. The masses are in a deplorable condition. This is the charge laid at our door by the West and with good reason too. We have no sympathy for the masses. As Swamiji said, the Brahmana should express his Brahmanhood by offering his treasures of spirituality to the masses. If the Brahmana needs one teacher, the Pariah needs four teachers, for the latter is less favourably gifted and circumstanced. This is equity.

The prosperity of a nation depends on the condition of the masses. India can rise only by the amelioration of the condition of the masses. Why is it that many Hindus have turned Christians or embraced other religions in the past, in spite of their having the most glorious religion? Because they have social and other disabilities. The higher castes are responsible for this. If we show them sympathy, if we put our religious ideas into practice, they will not desert our religion. As our Sastras say, all power, glory, knowledge, and good, is in all, for the same Brahman dwells in all. Only let them know it. Such gifts do not deprive the donor, but only increase his bounty. You may help with the means in your power—try with money, or with knowledge, or even by a kind word. In spite of other hospitals there is demand

for more hospitals etc., founded and run by us, because people believe that they can get more sympathy and humane treatment from the workers in our institutions. Not only the medicine, but sympathy and love also count. The monastic members of the Order and lay workers imbued with their spirit by contact with them do work in this spirit. So they are appreciated; and there is demand for more centres and institutions; but with the limited number of 500 monastic members of the Mission, we are not able to cope with the demands. We do not want to extend, for we wish to work intensively. We look to the quality rather than to the quantity of the work turned. But we are forced to expand in spite of ourselves for there is such a great demand.

Our preaching in the West has won appreciation from many of the cultured and the elite. There is a constant demand for more Swamis. The people of the West provide for their passage money to the West, their stay there, and their return when they wish to come back. All our Centres in India and in the West are self-supporting. The Head-Quarters has no funds to help them, but only directs their activities. And there is more and more local support everywhere.

After this great war, I assure you, there will be more demand for the religious and philosophical ideas of Hinduism. Already they have felt the need. Their material civilization has only led them to the present state of destructive war, due to material greed. So, the ideas from our religion should go to save them.

Swami Vivekananda on his return from the West, during his triumphal march from Colombo to Almora, was never tired of reiterating that we have something to give to the West; and that is our spirituality.

Let us prepare ourselves for it. Let us realize the spiritual truths in our Scriptures and put them into practice. Let not our life be divorced from our ideals. India cannot rise by mere social, political, or economic uplift. It is only in and through religion that India can regain the high place due to her by virtue of her great religion and philosophy. Let us see Brahman in all and serve all according to their needs. Then only shall we be



worthy descendants of our great ancestors, the great Rishis, worthy of our noble heritage. May God help us to become so.

Let us worship God not only in temples but in the human body, this greatest temple. Rain comes through conduits and channels. But rain is to be praised. So we are only conduits and channels. You are the rain, you are to be thanked.

Let us be infinite, not limited. 'In the limited, there is no happiness' says the Scriptures. Let us expand ourselves, so that we comprehend the whole Universe.

#### Report of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York

On Monday, April 15th, Swami Yatiswarananda arrived in New York City from Sweden, after six and a half years of pioneering work in Europe on behalf of the Ramakrishna Mission. The ship by which he sailed was the last to leave Norway before the outbreak of war in that country. The Swami was welcomed here as the guest of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, where he plans to remain for a number of months prior to an extended tour of the United States, when he will visit all the American centers. During the closing weeks of the season, the Swami has graciously consented to conduct the regular Gita class on Tuesday evenings.

In order to introduce Swami Yatiswarananda to the members and friends of the Center, a special service was held on Sunday morning, April 28th, at which the Swami spoke on 'Vedanta and Modern European Unrest.' He emphasized the fact that there will be unrest in the world as long as men continue to live by a double standard, with one set of ideals for themselves and another for those whom they exploit. He said further that there is no general solution for the world's problems; only if each individual strives for self-improvement can society in any measure be improved.

The same evening the annual Ramakrishna birthday dinner was held at Schrafft's, 220 West 57th Street. The speakers on this occasion were Swami Yatiswarananda, Mr. H. S. Malik, I.C.S., O.B.E., Mr. Henry T. Volkening, and Swami Nikhilananda. Mr. Ralph S. Robins, President of the Center, was toast-

master. Swami Yatiswarananda recounted some of the experiences of the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, and from them the lesson that we must be practical in everyday affairs as well as in our spiritual endeavours. Mr. Malik, the India Government Trade Commissioner in the United States, spoke of the necessity of religion if we are to keep our balance in the chaotic modern world. After his speech the guests also had the privilege of hearing a Hindu devotional song sung by Mrs. Malik. Mr. Volkening, Vice-president of the Center, read a number of illuminating quotations from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna. And in conclusion, Swami Nikhilananda showed how the advent of Sri Ramakrishna had turned men's thoughts from a God in heaven to the God residing in all men's hearts, pointing out also that as each age in history had had its own ideal man, so the ideal of the future should be the man of non-attachment. After the speeches some beautiful vocal and instrumental recordings of Hindu music were played. The first of these was 'Bande Mataram', during the playing of which the entire audience remained standing out of respect to the Indian nation. Moving pictures of India, taken during Swami Nikhilananda's trip to India several years ago, were also shown.

Another interesting event occurred at the Center a few days later, when on May 1st Swami Nikhilananda was host to about thirty children (aged about ten to twelve years) from the Dalton School, a leading progressive school of the city, where the Swami has often been invited to address the students. The children first went to the chapel, where they were allowed to ask questions and where, after listening to several Indian stories, they spent some time in simple meditation. After seeing some moving pictures of India, all came upstairs to the library, where they were served with Hindu refreshments prepared by the Swami. Particularly important in helping to convey a correct idea of Hindu culture and religion, in the Swami's opinion, is his work among American school-children.

The regular lectures and classes of the Center will continue as usual until the latter part of June, when Swami Nikhilananda and Swami Yatiswarananda will leave for their vacation together.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOLUME XXVII



NUMBER 5

SEPTEMBER, 1940.

## **HIS HIGHNESS SRI KRISHNARAJA WADAYAR BAHADUR, G.C.S.I., G.B.E.**

### **PASSES AWAY**

We record with deep sorrow the demise of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore at Bangalore on Saturday, August 3, 9 p.m., through the recrudescence of a heart attack which he contracted a week before the event. His age was fifty-seven when he was gathered to his fathers. Had he lived five days more he would have completed the thirty-eighth year of his benign and enlightened rule of a leading Native State which has, under his aegis, earned the far-spread fame of a model State.

It is superfluous for us to speak here at length about the life and deeds of His late Highness Sri Krishnaraja Wadayar, when numerous tributes have spontaneously proceeded from men of close knowledge, political genius, and undoubted distinction, making mention of his attractive personal traits such as sagacity, broad-mindedness, all-round sportsmanship, cultural universalism, and cultivated tastes for arts, as well as shining royal virtues like tolerance, statesmanship, sympathy with the demands of the subjects, intelligent knowledge of the theory and practice of government, cautious vigilance in the direction of the affairs of the State, and unremittent solicitude for the welfare and prosperity of his people which he evinced through educational, political, social, agricultural, industrial, and other measures of development for about four decades, which have issued in marvellously useful and far-reaching consequences.

An utterance which he made on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of his reign, in 1927, in reply to the appropriate demonstrations of heart-felt gratitude by his subjects

for the multifarious beneficences done to them gives first-hand evidence to the qualities of his head and heart. 'It is my earnest desire', he said, 'that this spirit of brotherhood should be extended to the continuous improvement of the conditions of those who are less fortunate than ourselves, remembering that all the communities alike are members of my people and children of my country....I send loving greetings to each of my dear people with a heart full of solicitude for their happiness. With unceasing effort I shall, while life lasts, endeavour to promote their welfare and prosperity, and pray that God may give light and strength to achieve this, the supreme object of my life and rule.'

This genuine faith in God and longing to serve the subjects with thought and vision, justice and sympathy, was the basis of the greatness of this noble sovereign. Traditionally the Rulers of Mysore have given safety and encouragement to the Smartas, Srivaishnavas, Vaishnavas, Virasaivas, and Jains. The late Highness, though firmly and sincerely devoted to his own religious convictions (the fervour evoked by which may be witnessed from the instance of the hazardous pilgrimage he undertook to the inaccessible holy heights of the Kailas), has continued and extended that proverbial patronage to other faiths like Christianity and Islam, fresh instances of which are only numerous.

It was a pleasure for him to meet scholars, pious men, and deep thinkers belonging to all religions, countries, and nationalities; and he himself took keen interest in philosophic studies. His honoured predecessor H. H. Sri Chamarajendra Wadavar Bahadur, G.C.S.I., was one of those wise Indian Rulers who came into contact with the spiritual genius of Swami Vivekananda before he became a world figure, and His late Highness the Maharaja had been in active sympathy with the Mission that has its existence for the fulfilment of the noble ideals of the Swamiji, as is testified by the gracious support he had been extending on various occasions for the furtherance of its work in his State. The dominant note in the message of Swami Vivekananda was that modern world needs a harmonious combination of all that is best in Eastern and Western cultures; and the Maharaja whose departure we lament was a brilliant instance of this blending of the oriental and occidental ideals. It is, therefore, with a peculiar sense of loss that we join our homage to this great and good Ruler with those of others, and communicate our profound condolence to the bereaved royal family and State. May he abide in unchangeable Peace. Om Santih, Om Santih, Om Santih.—EDITOR.

## A LETTER FROM SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA <sup>1</sup>

Mylapore, Madras.

20—11—1908

My dear friends,

I am very glad to go through the Report of your Sabha. May God bless it with long life of usefulness. I shall be very happy to be of any service to your Sabha, and if my name as patron can be of any use to it, I shall be very thankful to all of you for enlisting me as one. You need not be anxious about the funds, if you do your duty in connection with the Sabha with all love, honesty, purity, and selflessness. The enthusiasm which you now evince for its upkeep should be perennial and steady, and you will be able to create an interest for the institution in the minds of the generous-minded men. Thus you can easily get rid of all your financial difficulties. 'Heaven helps those who help themselves'—do not forget this. You should know how to feel for His children's welfare, and then everything will come up very easily. The true worker never cares for name or fame; he is actuated by an unselfish love towards the future inheritors of the Earth, our little boys and girls.

I am very glad to know that you have taken up the education of the girls first. Our boys get some sort of education now-a-days, but girls are mostly neglected all over India. So our primary duty is to look after the education of our girls, the future mothers of India.

I should like to suggest to you something about the method of teaching which they should receive from the school. We should not make our girls imitate manners and customs that are altogether uncongenial to their nature. We should hold before them the highest types of womanhood such as Sita, Damayanti, Savitri, and the host of illustrious ladies that form a galaxy of goddesses in our immortal Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Puranams. The teachers should be made to narrate the life histories of those goddesses in human forms in the most attractive, simple, and intelligent way. One hour may be fixed for such narrations at least twice a week, if not on every working day. They should be made to be perfect Hindu girls imbued with reverence

---

<sup>1</sup> Swami Ramakrishnananda was a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and the founder of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in Madras and the inspirer of the same Movement in South India, Burma, and Malaya. The Sabha mentioned in the letter is the 'Swami Vivekananda Sabha' of Dharapuram, Coimbatore Dt., started in 1905, by one who had met Swami Vivekananda in Madras.

for all our Gods and Goddesses, the manifestations of the one Supreme Being. The stories of Dhruva, Prahlada, and all the great devotees of God should be described to them in the most impressive and charming manner possible. There is no use in trying to teach them some abstract things which young minds would not be able to grasp and which will hence prove absolutely uninteresting; then all efforts towards such directions would prove as fruitless as crying in the wilderness. I hope that these few suggestions will be of some use to your noble Sabha.

With the best love and blessings of our most revered President, His serene Holiness the Swami Brahmananda, and of my humble self,

I am,  
Yours affectionately,  
(Sd.) RAMAKRISHNANANDA.

## THE SADHANA OF THE BHAGAVADGITA

**Dr. S. K. Maitra, M.A., Ph.D.,** Head of the Department of Philosophy, Benares Hindu University, is the author of the *Neo-romantic Movement in Contemporary Philosophy* and other works. In the following paper he gives a compendious analysis of the *Bhagavadgita* viewed as a practical scripture illuminating the paths of spiritual realization. A translation of this paper into Hindi has appeared in the 'Sadhana' number of the *Kalyan*.—Ed.

THE *Bhagavadgita* is essentially a book of Sadhana or way to realization. It is not a book of Jnana, or Karma, or Bhakti, though it treats of all these from the point of view of realization.

### THE GITA IS A YOGASASTRA: MEANING OF THE WORD 'YOGA'

The *Bhagavadgita*, in fact, is a Yogasashtra. Every chapter of it ends with the words, '*Iti sri Bhagavadgitasu upanishatsu Brahmanavidyayam Yogasastre sri Krishnarjunasamvade*

... *Yogo nama... adhyayah*. Every chapter is called a Yoga. Thus, we have *Arjunavishadayoga*, *Samkhyayoga*, *Karmayoga*, etc. as the names of the different chapters.

What, however, is meant by the word 'Yoga'? Mr. D. S. Sharma in his *Introduction to the Bhagavadgita* defines Yoga as fellowship with God. Sri Krishna Prem also similarly says (Vide *The Yoga of the Bhagavadgita*, p. xiv), 'By yoga is here meant not any special system called by that name, not Jnanayoga, nor Karma-yoga, nor Bhaktiyoga, nor the eight-fold Yoga of Patanjali, but just the Path by which man unites his finite self with Infinite Being.'

Yoga, therefore, means union with God. But union with God implies three things: (a) union with oneself, leading to the realization of the individual self, (b) union with the Cosmos, leading to the realization of the Cosmic Self, and (c) union of the two unions, leading to full self-realization or God-realization. The

different Yogas dealt with in the *Gita* may thus be broadly classed under three heads: (1) those whose object is the realization of the individual self, (2) those whose object is the realization of the Cosmic Self, and (3) those which have for their object complete self-realization or God-realization. One thing, however, should be clearly understood at the very beginning. Although for convenience of exposition, we may classify the Yogas under the above three heads, yet we must never forget that the *Gita* does not believe in piecemeal realization. The *Gita* looks upon realization as one whole, and does not think it possible to divide it as we have done for purposes of exposition. No realization is possible unless one goes through the whole of the eighteen Sadhanas described in the eighteen chapters.

#### SOME PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS:

##### (a) WHOSE IS THE REALIZATION SPOKEN OF IN THE GITA?

Before we come to the subject of realization proper, there are two preliminary questions which we must discuss. The first is: Whose is the realization spoken of in the *Gita*? Is it the realization of a normal human being or of a supernormal, enlightened being? This question is of fundamental importance, for if the *Gita* discussed only the realization proper to an advanced soul, it would be a technical book, of interest only to a favoured few. If, however, it dealt with the realization of a normal human being, it would be of interest to all normally constituted human beings.

The *Gita* describes the realization vouchsafed to Arjuna. Who is Arjuna? Is he only a normal human

being, or is he a supernaturally gifted, enlightened soul? Arjuna, of course, is a Kshatriya and belongs to a very noble house, namely, the lunar royal house. He has also received education proper to a Kshatriya, and has, in addition, had instruction in military science from a veteran teacher, like the great Dronacharya. But he has had no instruction in Adhyatmavidya or the science of the Self. He has had no training in spiritual matters. Nor does he show any particular aptitude for these. He is superstitious, he sees omens (*Nimittani cha pasyami viparitani Kesava*, i: 31). He is highly emotional. Seeing his own kinsmen and relations arrayed against him, his body trembles, his limbs get paralysed, and his bow slips from his hand (i: 29, 30). These things do not suggest any great spiritual advancement, rather they suggest the reverse. His decision to give up the fight is also not due to any high moral principles. It is not due, as some people seem to believe, to his faith in Ahimsa. It is simply due to emotions getting the better of his reason. The arguments which he advances are extremely specious, and he therefore well deserves the taunting remark of Lord Krishna, 'You speak words of wisdom!' (ii: 11). He himself admits that his will has become weak, his mind has become puzzled, and he does not know what his duty is (ii: 7). It is impossible, therefore, to contend that Arjuna's refusal to fight was actuated by the highest motives. Mr. D. S. Sharma, in his book already referred to, has very well expressed the hollowness of such a contention.

I maintain, therefore, that Arjuna is nothing more than a normal human being. Of course, he is a good subject

for instruction; otherwise the Divine Teacher would not have accepted him as the vehicle for his teachings. He possesses also humility, although this humility is still touched with egotism. (Witness the words 'na yotsye' occurring almost immediately after the words 'Sishyas te 'ham sadhi mam tvam prapannam'). But he is certainly not an enlightened soul or one that is spiritually advanced. What he achieves therefore in the realm of spiritual realization is possible for every normal human being, provided he is sufficiently earnest about it. It is also not true that it is Brahmanas and Kshatriyas only that can profit by the instruction communicated to Arjuna. The *Gita* is very catholic. For instance, it states towards the close of its teaching:

अदावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः ।

सोऽपि पूतः शुभांशोऽन्नाप्राप्तुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥

Of course, a man, in order to profit by this instruction, should possess faith. But that is the condition necessary for all instruction. No man can profit by any instruction if he takes it in a carping spirit. The *Gita* nowhere says that it is only privileged beings or persons belonging to the higher castes who can benefit by its teaching. Here is the secret of its extraordinary hold upon the minds of men and women of all ranks and conditions.

(b) WHAT IS THE 'ANSTOSS' THAT  
RELEASES THE TEACHING OF  
THE *GITA*?

The next question which we have to tackle before we can come to our real subject is: What is the *Anstoss* or shock that releases the teaching of the *Gita*? For there must be some *Anstoss*, some experience that

shakes one's whole Being, which throws a man into that condition in which he feels the need for spiritual advancement. All spiritual progress starts from some crisis, some catastrophic experience which shakes to its very foundations the moral being of man. What is this crisis as depicted in the *Gita*? The crisis is clearly described in the first chapter, as well as in verses 4 to 8 of the second chapter. It is conflict in Arjuna between sentiment and duty. A true picture of Arjuna's mental state is given in verses 29 and 30 of the first chapter already referred to above. Arjuna speaks there of his limbs being paralysed and his mouth being parched, his hair standing on end, and his bow involuntarily falling from his hand—characteristics which point to excessive emotionalism leading to a paralysis of the will. It is not a very uncommon experience. Many of us have this kind of experience as a result of fright or grief. In Arjuna's case this condition was brought about by the sight of so many near and dear relations of his (as mentioned in i: 26 and 27) whom he might have to kill in case he engaged in the fight. But this by itself would not have caused a crisis. The crisis is due to the fact that Arjuna has also a dim perception of the fact that it is his duty to fight. This idea of duty is working in his subconscious mind and forces him to put forward opposite reasons to counteract its effect. These are really the mask which his emotions wear in order to hide their real character. Readers who have any acquaintance with the works of Freud and his disciples know too well this device, which emotions have of hiding their true character, to be reminded of it.

The mask is almost removed and the true situation revealed in verse 46, where he says, 'If the sons of Dhritarashtra, weapon in hand, should slay me, unarmed, in the battle, that would for me be better.' No man in possession of his reason can talk like this. It is the utterance of a man whose reason is entirely overcome by emotions. The crisis is therefore the conflict between emotion and a vague conception of duty working in the subconscious mind.

Why, however, is this crisis called a Yoga? Why is this condition of Arjuna called *arjunavishadayoga*? It seems at first sight to be the very reverse of a Yoga. It is, no doubt, true that Arjuna's mind is quite distracted, but the distraction is the first step to realization, and hence it is most appropriately called a Yoga. Here the author of the *Gita* shows his wonderful knowledge of the psychology of spiritual realization. In the lives of many saints and founders of religions, we read of similar dejections and mental catastrophes which started them on the path of realization. Thus, for instance, the sight of disease, decrepitude, and death, caused a shock in the mind of the Buddha which led him to renounce a kingdom and lead a wandering life in search of truth. Even in the lives of ordinary mortals, a great shock in the shape of disappointment or grief is very often the starting-point of a new spiritual life. The *vishada* of Arjuna, therefore, is rightly called a Yoga, although it does not possess all the characteristics of a Yoga.

#### THE YOGA OF THE GITA: FORMAL CHARACTERISTICS

Coming now to the question of the Yoga of the *Bhagavadgita*, we

find that the *Gita* mentions certain universal characteristics (which we may call the formal characteristics) of Yoga. Every Yoga, no matter of what kind, must possess these characteristics. The only exception is the first Yoga, *arjunavishadayoga*, which, as we have already seen, does not possess these characteristics but is called Yoga for special reasons.

These formal characteristics of every Yoga have been stated in various ways in different chapters of the *Gita*, and even in the same chapter they have been described in different ways. In the main, they are: disregard of the fruit of action (ii: 47, iv: 29, v: 12), non-attachment to objects (ii: 48, iii: 19), balance or mental equipoise (*samatva*, ii: 48), desirelessness (iv: 19), indifference to pleasure and pain, to loss or gain (ii: 38), indifference to heat and cold, honour and dishonour (vi: 7 and xii: 18), impartiality to friends and foes, neutrals, strangers, and relations (vi: 9). These negative characteristics may be summed up in one word: non-attachment to objects. In addition to these negative characteristics, every Yoga shows some positive features which are chiefly these: placing all actions in God (ix: 27, iv: 10), contentment under all conditions (xii: 19, xii: 4), fixing the mind on God (xii: 7 and 8). Various other positive characteristics are mentioned, but I think they may be reduced to one or other of the three noted above.

That there are certain formal characteristics which are common to all the Yogas appears from the wonderful similarity of the descriptions of the different types of *yogins*—*karmayogin*, *jñanayogin*, *bhaktiyogin*, *samkhyayogin*, etc. I place



side by side below the characteristics of the *sthitaprajna* or the *samkhyayogin* with those of the *bhaktimat* who has attained realization through Bhakti, from which the reader will see how close is the resemblance between them.

Characteristics of the *sthitaprajna*

दुःखेष्वद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।

वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।

नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥

II: 56-57

Characteristics of the *bhaktimat*

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।

शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥

समः शतौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविजितः ॥

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी सन्तुष्टो येन केनचित् ।

अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः ॥

XII: 17-19

If we compare these, again, with the characteristics of the *trigunatita* as given in the fourteenth chapter:

समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोटाग्रमकाञ्चनः ।

तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः ॥

मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुत्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।

सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥

XIV: 24-25

the resemblance is very striking. These striking resemblances can point to only one conclusion, namely, that there are certain universal characteristics which every Yoga, *qua* Yoga, must possess.

The constant repetition of these formal characteristics has been the cause of a number of misconceptions regarding the real objective of the *Gita*. Thus it easily leads to the erroneous view that the true purpose of the *Gita* is to preach Karmayoga,

for it satisfies all the formal conditions of Yoga as described above. But it is conveniently forgotten that if Karmayoga satisfies these requirements, so does Samkhyayoga, or Jnanayoga, or Dhyanyoga, or Bhaktiyoga. Thus, from the mere fact that a particular Yoga possesses all the essential characteristics, it cannot be said that it is the Yoga particularly favoured by the *Gita*.

Unlike Kant, however, who gives only the formal characteristics of the moral law, the *Gita* gives, in addition to the formal characteristics, what we may call the material characteristics peculiar to every Yoga. As Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ranaswami Sastri rightly observes, (*Vide Problems of the Bhagavadgita*, p. 39), 'it is clear that while self-control, purity, renunciation of desire, love to all, absence of egoism, absence of sense of possession, sameness in relation to heat and cold, pleasure and pain, praise and blame, etc., are common to all the Yogas, Karmayoga stresses Karma, Rajayoga stresses Dhyana, Bhaktiyoga stresses Bhakti, and Jnanayoga stresses Jnana.' Every Yoga has got a definite positive content which defines its goal. Thus, Karmayoga has got for its definite goal *loka-samgraha*, welfare of all the *lokas* (people), Jnanayoga has for its object the knowledge that 'Vasudeva is all'. So also Samkhyayoga has for its end *Brahmi sthiti* (ii: 72), Rajayoga or Dhyanyoga the 'enjoyment of the infinite bliss of contact with Brahman' (vi: 28). Similarly, the Visvarupayoga has for its object the vision of the Cosmic Form of God, and Bhaktiyoga the attainment of the condition of being 'very dear to God' (xii: 20). In this way,

every Yoga, in addition to its purely formal characteristics, has got a definite positive content.

DOES THE GITA TEACH ANY PARTICULAR YOGA, OR DOES IT GIVE EQUAL IMPORTANCE TO ALL THE DIFFERENT YOGAS?

The question we have next to ask is: Is it the object of the *Gita* to expound any particular Yoga, such as Karmayoga, or Jnanayoga, or Bhaktiyoga, or does it attach equal importance to all the different Yogas? This question has given rise to most of the controversies relating to the *Gita*. The great Acharyas looked upon the *Gita* as preaching either the gospel of Knowledge or the gospel of Bhakti, whereas the late Lokamanya Tilak looked upon the *Gita* as expounding only the doctrine of Karma-yoga. It is not possible to go into the details of this controversy within the limited space at my disposal. But I may offer one or two considerations which go against the view that the *Gita*'s object is to expound one particular Yoga and to treat others either as leading to, or as subordinate to, this single Yoga. The first thing that I want to say is that such a view does not at all explain why the *Gita* should give so much space to the discussion of the other kinds of Yogas. It would have sufficed to elaborate fully the central Yoga and simply to point out that all the other Yogas are only ancillary to it, or are ultimately merged in it. But the *Gita* has never done it. It is true that it has occasionally expressed the equivalence of different methods of realisation. For instance, in v: 4 and 5 it expressly states that Samkhya and Yoga are one and the same and equally lead to the same

goal. In v: 2, moreover, *karmayoga* is pronounced to be better than *karmasannyasa*, which is the path of *samkhya*. But here we should note carefully the context in which these statements occur. They are an answer to Arjuna's question: 'Renunciation of action you praise, O Krishna, and then also Yoga. Of the two, which one is the better? Tell me that conclusively' (v: 1). Really speaking, in the previous chapter, that is, the fourth chapter, renunciation of action was not advocated. This is clear from the last two verses of that chapter which sum up the teaching of that chapter:

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं ज्ञानसंखिनसंशयम् ।  
आत्मवन्तं न कर्मणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ॥  
तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनाऽऽत्मनः ।  
द्वित्वैर्न संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥

IV: 41-42

These verses leave no room for doubt that the *Gita* does not advocate renunciation of action. The words, '*atmavantam na karmani nibadhnanti*' would in fact, lose all their meaning if the verses had for their object the preaching of the doctrine of renunciation of action. But still, as the late Lokamanya Tilak suggested, the *Gita* felt that there might be some doubt in the minds of men about the true meaning of the teaching of the previous chapter. And this doubt was expressed through the mouth of Arjuna, and the *Gita* in the fifth chapter states its own point of view in unmistakable terms so as to remove all possibility of doubt. ;

Why does the *Gita*, however, say, '*sannyasah karmayogas cha nisreyasakaravubhau*'? Its own view is not that renunciation of action leads to emancipation; on the contrary, it asserts definitely in iii: 4

that realisation cannot be obtained by renunciation of work. The reason why the *Gita*, in spite of its clearly stated view on the question, asserts that *sannyasa* and *karmayoga* both lead to emancipation is probably that, as stated in iii: 3, the Lord Himself stated at the beginning of creation<sup>1</sup> that there are two paths leading to salvation, namely, the path of knowledge practised by the Samkhyaists (involving renunciation of action) and the path of *Karmayoga* practised by the Yogins. The *Gita* has accepted this view stated by the Lord at the time of creation in a completely changed form, for it does not value the *sannyasa* which consists in renunciation of action but the other type of *sannyasa* which consists in the renunciation of the fruits of action. It has given a new definition of *sannyasa*: 'The sages have known as *sannyasa* the renunciation of work prompted by desire' (xviii: 2), and has given a new definition of *sannyasins* 'He who performs such action as is duty, irrespective of the fruit of action, is a *sannyasin*, a *yogin*, not he that is without fire or without rites' (vi: 1).

Moreover the object of the *Gita* in stating in v: 4 and 5 that *samkhya* and *yoga* are one and the same is not to indicate that the one can be

resolved into the other, but to show that there is no opposition between the two. In fact, it is one of the chief merits of the *Gita* that it harmonizes the two very nicely with the help of its conception of Yoga. The *Samkhya* that was without action is transformed by the *Gita* into the *samkhyayoga* that advocates action, and the *Karma* that was based upon desire is transformed into the *Karmayoga* that is based upon desirelessness. So again, the *Sannyasa* that meant renunciation of action is changed into the *Sannyasayoga* that means renunciation of the fruits of action. In this way, with the help of its conception of Yoga, the *Gita* retains the essential elements in *samkhya*, *karma*, and *sannyasa*, and at the same time avoids those elements which produce a conflict between those paths.

I therefore hold that the *Gita* does not advocate any particular Yoga to the exclusion of all others, nor does it believe in any opposition between one Yoga and another. There is also a meaning in the order in which the different Yogas are presented; the order represents the natural stages in the gradual advance to complete self-realization. Thus, the *Samkhyayoga* taught in the second chapter leads naturally to the *Karmayoga* of the third chapter, and the latter in its turn to the *Jnanavibhagayoga* of the fourth chapter. The teaching of the fourth chapter inevitably raises the question of the relation between *sannyasa* and *karma*, and this is the subject-matter of the fifth chapter which is named *Sannyasayoga*. The relations between *karma*, *jnana*, and *sannyasa* being thus established, the next question that arises is one concerning the nature of realization

<sup>1</sup> The late Lokamanya Tilak gave two meanings of the word *pura* in this verse. These two meanings are, respectively, 'at the beginning of creation' (as described in *Mab. San.* 340 and 347) and 'as described in the previous chapter'. He himself prefers the latter sense. I take the word, however, in the former sense, because Lord Krishna did not advocate the doctrine of the renunciation of action in the previous chapter. The *Samkhyayoga* which he preached in it is not the doctrine of renunciation of work but of the fruit of work.

through *dhyana* or meditation, and this is the theme of the sixth chapter, which is therefore properly named *Dhyana-yoga* or *Rajayoga*. This finishes the *Yogas* that deal mainly with the realization of the individual self. Then come those *Yogas* which treat of the realization of the Cosmic Self. These form the subject-matter of Chapters VII-XII. And lastly, come those *Yogas* which have for their subject-matter the unity of the two realizations, that is, complete self-realization or God-realization. These constitute the theme of the last six chapters of the *Gita*.

FIRST DIVISION OF THE YOGAS: YOGAS  
RELATING TO THE REALIZATION  
OF THE INDIVIDUAL SELF

As I have indicated above, the principle of classification that will be followed in this article is the nature of realization. In accordance with this principle, the first class of *Yogas* deals with the realization of the individual self. Of course, as I have stated at the outset, there is no realization which is purely individual, every realization bringing with it all the three types of realization. But the first six chapters may be broadly said to be concerned with the subject of the realization of the individual self. The chief thing that stands in the way of the realization of the individual self is the presence of conflict in the individual. I have shown these conflicts very fully in a recent article of mine<sup>2</sup>, and I need not therefore discuss the matter in detail here. The conflicts which divide the individual are not resolved until we

reach the sixth chapter, where with the help of *Rajayoga* or *Dhyana-yoga*, the divided individual is able to realize his integral personality. And here I would like to stress the point which I have pointed out in the article referred to above, namely, that a full realization of the individual's complete personality is not possible until we come to the last chapter, where Arjuna is able to say that all his delusions are gone and he is in a position to do the Lord's bidding (xviii: 73).

SECOND DIVISION OF THE YOGAS:  
YOGAS DEALING WITH THE  
REALIZATION OF THE COSMIC  
SELF

So far we have dealt with the first step in realization. The next step in realization, the ascent from the individual self to that of the Cosmic Self, I have depicted in my article 'The Cosmic Significance of Karma in the Bhagavadgita' (*Prabuddha Bharata*, February, 1939), and I need therefore give here only the briefest outline of the process. The ascent to this realization begins from the seventh chapter, and it is in this chapter that the teaching of the *Gita* takes a distinctly cosmic turn. The individual is here for the first time brought into relationship with the Cosmic Reality. The distinction between *Para Prakriti* and *Apara Prakriti* is also made in this chapter, and *Para Prakriti* is defined as '*Jiva-bhuta*', '*yayedam dharyate jagat*'. This definition of *Para Prakriti* is significant, because it brings into clear relief the relation between the higher Nature of God and the individual self, and thus makes it possible for the latter to seek God-realization.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Idea of Conflict in the *Bhagavad-gita*' (Article contributed to the *K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar Commemoration Volume*).

In the eighth chapter the cosmic significance of Karma is clearly stated in the third verse, which may consequently be regarded as one of the basic verses of the *Gita*. The chapter proceeds to describe the cosmic destiny of the individual, and this theme is continued in the next chapter. In the ninth chapter there occur also those famous verses which describe the nature of God. These verses bring out both the transcendent and the immanent character of God, though they emphasize the former more than the latter. This is natural, for the object of this chapter is to present God in His cosmic aspect. In the tenth chapter, which is characteristically called Vibhuti-yoga, the cosmic aspect of God is most strongly emphasized. The chapter further stresses the trans-human, cosmic character of God, as will be evident from the following verses:

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभव न महर्षयः ।  
अहमादिहि देवानां महर्षीणां च सर्वशः ॥  
मोमामजमनादि च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम् ।  
असम्भुटः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥

X: 2-3

As Sri Krishna Prem puts it, 'It is thus not a person who is speaking in the *Gita* but the great Brahman out of which all beings come and into which all will in time return'<sup>3</sup>. His transcendence is indeed so great that Arjuna is constrained to say: *Na hi te bhagavan vyaktim vidur deva na danavah* (X: 14).

But it is in the eleventh chapter that the transcendent character reaches its culmination and the stu-

pendous grandeur and infinite greatness of God are fully revealed. The revelation is so awe-inspiring that Arjuna literally shakes with fear and begs the Lord to resume His human form (xi: 45). He recovers his composure only when God assumes again His human form (xi: 51).

The twelfth chapter, as I have shown elsewhere, is also needed to complete the ascent to the Cosmic Self. Bhakti is the only attitude possible to a being who has had the vision of the Cosmic Form of the Lord. Bhaktiyoga, therefore, is a necessary complement to Visvarupa-yoga.

This finishes the Yogas relating to the ascent of the soul. Arjuna has now got a glimpse of the greatness and infinite power of God. But he is dazzled by this vision and he loses his bearings. What is needed, therefore, is a link between the Godhead in Its infinite majesty and the individual in his insignificance. As Sri Aurobindo puts it: 'The infinite presence in its unmitigated splendour would be too overwhelming for the separate littleness of the limited, individual and natural man. A link is needed by which he can see this universal Godhead in his own individual and natural being, close to him, not only omnipotently there to govern all he is by universal and immeasurable Power, but humanly figured to support and raise him to unity by an intimate and individual relation'<sup>4</sup>. This link is supplied by Lord Krishna assuming the human form.

<sup>3</sup> Vide *The Yoga of the Bhagavadgita*, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> *Essays on the Gita*, 2nd Series, p. 197.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA: THE IDEAL AND PATTERN OF RELIGIOUS ASPIRANTS

It is not often that we lay stress upon the avatarhood of Sri Ramakrishna. Suppression of this truth may give rise to the belief that he was only an ordinary man. This, however, is natural, because man is averse to approach a personality radiant with the lustre of divinity. And so, he often puts back the divinity and occupies himself with the human aspect. It happened so in the case of Chaitanya Deva whose beaming radiance kept back onlookers at times. God is freely accessible to man only under the mask of humanity. It is, therefore, just that we lay stress upon the incarnation aspect also lest we should forget it altogether.

Whenever a claim is made as to the avatarhood of an outstanding personality, we examine the facts of his life and times and ascertain how far the claim is justified in the light of the well-known principle laid down by Bhagavan Sri Krishna in the *Bhagavadgita* when he declared: 'Whenever virtue withers and vice flourishes, I incarnate myself for the revivification of the former'. The failure of decadent Tantricism and Vaishnavism to square with the spiritual needs of the times, the onrush of western materialism which brought in its train an aversion for the ideals and customs of India's past, the bankruptcy of science to supply anything on the spiritual side, and the flagrant hypocrisy that resulted from the attempt to compromise opposite ideals, brought about the necessary

conditions for a divine advent; and as if to redeem the promise which Sri Krishna had made in the *Gita* Sri Ramakrishna incarnated.

When we look at the life of his parents, perfectly centred in God through loving devotion and self-dedication, and their moral excellences such as fearless integrity, utter simplicity, and overflowing compassion that endeared them to the neighbours and evoked the admiration of all, we seem to be justified in the belief commonly held, that God takes human body from holy parents and in surroundings far from the distracting gorgeousness of accumulated opulence and its attendant vices. Man's ascent to God is a process evolving persistent striving. But the descent of God is spontaneous though indications are given even before the nativity, and certainly early enough in life. An apt illustration of this we have in the divine trances into which Sri Ramakrishna fell in his early boyhood, on the three recorded occasions; namely, when he was overwhelmed by the sublime spectacle of a flight of cranes silhouetted against the blue expanse above a vast corn field, when he appeared on the stage in a country drama in the company of his playmates in the robe of Siva, and when the soul-stirring songs of his companions on the way to the Visalakshi temple sent him into the profound divine mood. But for the sparingly occasional super-normal disclosures of his inherent divinity, Sri Ramakrishna was a normal,

merry boy, full of energy and enthusiasm, exhibiting in various ways aesthetic and intellectual precocity and manifesting the qualities of leadership by being a prince among his playmates.

A decisive period in his life was entered upon when he protested manfully against the persuasions of his brother to acquire proficiency in secular sciences. His resolute preference of the things of the spirit now placed him on the path that led to Divinity. This unusual religious bias attracted him to realms where even the most successful men of the world do not dare to peep; where he, on the other hand, found himself quite at home.

He now shone as an unrivalled example of a simple but profound truth which he was never tired of repeating; namely, that the means of attaining to the spiritual goal lies through the achievement of absolute correspondence between profession and practice, or, as he puts it, by making mind and mouth one. With an indefatigable will he then set his steps on various ways of realization one after another (some of these were extremely difficult and too risky for ordinary mortals to attempt) and eventually achieved that perfection which each mode of spiritual striving has set for its goal, within the minimum time and number of attempts. It would not have been possible for a mere man to have achieved all this, alone. And one may evidently trace the Divine hand in the various circumstances that presented themselves to crown his manifold strivings with signal success. The supremely learned Brahmani Yogesvari, the wandering ascetic Totapuri, and several others of exalted spiritual attainments

were attracted to him and were anxious to serve his purpose because of this divine impulse. But in fact his own pure mind itself was his first and foremost important teacher. He himself expressed: 'Whenever necessity arose, a young Sannyasin from inside my body, in appearance exactly like myself, would come out and teach me everything.... What I had heard from him before, the same teachings I heard from Brahmani, Totapuri, and others.' This being so, his acceptance of various Gurus may be assumed to be the outcome of his own eagerness to respect Scriptural tradition. All these events add one after another to the indisputable fact that he was a God-man; but he always kept the attitude of unconcern when the question of avatarhood was debated in his very presence by wise men, extremely erudite in scriptures, and cited authorities in order to settle that truth. The Sastras, throughout, corroborated the genuineness of his own experiences and set at rest the doubts that assailed his childlike mind regarding his realizations.

In the face of these facts it would not be extravagant to assert that he is the most acceptable incarnation for the present age. For in the case of other incarnations the facts of their lives have acquired an added halo during the course of several centuries through which they have been transmitted. The life of Sri Ramakrishna stands bereft of such romantic embellishments. We are almost in impenetrable darkness regarding the spiritual disciplines and other intimate details bearing upon the lives of other incarnations. But an adequate knowledge of Sri Ramakrishna's thoughts and practices are vouchsafed to us by

reliable and critical minds that had the opportunity of observing him closely. The Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Brahmananda, and others who played important role in serving him according to the most scrupulous religious standards have become vehicles of his message. The divine trances that overtook him every now and then at the slightest Sattvic suggestion, so anxiously witnessed by Holy Mother even through successive nights, are proofs to guard against doubts regarding the divinity embodied in his human vesture. The constellation of blessed souls that surrounded him also came to set up a new standard of spirituality.

These exalted spiritual moods and experiences did not, however, make Sri Ramakrishna dry or exclusive. He was as hilarious as a happy boy; and had an unfailing treasure of highly didactic humour which impressed upon the hearers even extremely subtle truths of religion with homely ease and unusual incisiveness.

It is not possible here to deal with the many lessons which we learn from his life at sufficient length. As householders it would be advantageous for you to remember the following few facts.

The moment we begin to reflect upon his life we are struck by the fact of his constant absorption in God. While he was living, the very atmosphere of Dakshineswar was surcharged with the spirit of Sadhana, and it was his singular skill to divert even ordinary topics of discussion to divine themes. May be, that that proportion of divine absorption is beyond our common capacity to achieve. That is no excuse to abate our endeavour for the achievement of the best that we could

within our powers. He used to narrate the parable of the mother who attended to the husking machine and to the nursing of her child simultaneously with sufficient care to keep herself from any hurt, and the practice of applying oil to the hands before opening the jack fruit so that the sticky exudation may not smear the hands, in order to illustrate the necessity of fixing the central interest in God and keeping oneself free from the contaminations of the impure world, to the duties of which one is bound by one's position. Just as office work, however important it may be, is but subsidiary to the life at home which is the principal care of a man, so also, life in God must be made the principal end by bringing Him into everyday life.

Secondly, Sri Ramakrishna set the highest value on moral perfection. He conveniently summed up all moral lapses to which man is liable under the phrase *Kamini-kanchana* and frequently exhorted the hearers to look upon all women (except one's own wife, if married) as mother and to banish from mind all false valuations attached to money. Money has value only on the sense plane; and there too it is a snare if it is looked upon not as a means but as an end in itself, as it is the wont of some who are given to the habit of hoarding wealth. When the custodians of temples and other institutions set aside all proper rules for catering to the wishes of the rich, on no other merit except that they are influential, they certainly dethrone God and reinstate money in His place. Money can never be the be-all and end-all of life.

A third lesson which Sri Ramakrishna impressed by his unexception-



able practice and repeated precepts was the need of a profitable measure of austerity. He could never brook over-attention to creature comforts or *dehasukha* as he termed it. For it often takes the shape of indulgence in luxury which is an impediment to spiritual progress. He was strongly opposed to the comfortable view that religion is for old age when the body is jaded and the nerves are frayed. No. One must take to spirituality while quite young. The Brahmin boy strictly brought up under traditional rules of conduct has an excellent training in self-control and purity, if he conforms to the fasts, holy baths, and other traditional practices which teach devotion, faith, modesty, and courtesy. Unless an ideal is scrupulously followed and for the sake of it some privations are undergone, it is not possible to progress in spiritual matters.

Sri Ramakrishna never approved of behaving just to please others. This variety of conceit he styled '*lokamanya*' and admonished all to cast it out at the earliest opportunity. Display of one's charity, anxiety to keep one's reputation by hook or crook, and relish for flattery, were condemned by him in the strongest terms. When somebody paid encomiums to him, he at once changed the topic of parlance. Once when his hand was fractured by a fall while in trance, one of his close attendants wanted to keep the fact a secret. But he was the first to cry out to the visiting doctor in the presence of others that his hand was fractured. Another incident is narrated regarding his extreme humility. Quite simple in his behaviour and mode of life as he was, one day he was found in the temple garden of Dakshineswar

by a doctor, who ordered him to get a few flowers. Sri Ramakrishna readily got the flowers for him without any hesitation. The doctor was embarrassed when he came to know, on a later occasion when he came to treat the Master, that that humble person was Sri Ramakrishna himself. It is nothing strange when you remember the fact that he saw Divinity first and then humanity, and that therefore whenever a person paid him a visit he was the first to salute the visitor. Such humility and transparent sincerity so common with him, are great object lessons for all. It is said that when a cart driver confessed that he did not know to count and so would be satisfied if the due charges were given, Sri Ramakrishna was immensely pleased with his straightforwardness and perfect trustfulness. He detested hypocrisy and commended purity, steadfastness, one-pointedness, and integrity wherever they were found.

Sri Ramakrishna, we may note in conclusion, has not come specially for India, but for the entire world. In this attitude only we can benefit by his life and teachings. We require new adjustments according to the times. We have to keep the central core of our culture and make adjustments in the minor details. A certain adaptation to the existing conditions is necessary and adhesion to scrupulous details of lifeless orthodoxy must be replaced by genuine spirituality. It is well-known that revelation or *Sruti*, although it holds good for all times, expressions of it through customary law or *Smṛiti* demands change according to the age. The Brahmin should not claim that he alone should have all the best things of the world. India is vene-

rated for her spirituality, and it is the duty of the Brahmin through his broadmindedness and same-sightedness to see this claim justified. The lower classes should be levelled up by proper education, and the gulf that yawns between them and the higher classes should by no means be allowed to become wider.

The complaint is often made that the younger generation is outward-minded and not amenable to discipline. But instead of hedging them with 'don'ts', if parents create a truly religious atmosphere at home by the practice of abstention and self-control on their part and allow them freedom to have harmless joys, such complaints will have no ground to rise. Sri Ramakrishna never tabooed harmless joys. He was a past-master in invoking sublime feelings by his unrivalled songs. His own lifelong devotion to his mother, again, must be made a pattern for the younger generation to follow. If we strictly adhere to his words and his example,

it is quite possible for any one of us to be more spiritual than we find ourselves to be at present. From whichever angle we look, Sri Ramakrishna's life is an example for us. It is no idle claim that he has ushered in a new period in history and has given a new orientation to the course of human progress. It is impossible to subscribe to his ideal and to indulge in sectional thinking. He taught by his whole life that God alone is real, and that as long as we aspire for those things that lead towards Him in the light of the example of the saints of all the countries and their words, we need not have any doubt regarding our progress towards that goal. To put briefly, Sri Ramakrishna's programme was two-fold: to realize direct kinship with God within and to be always ready to serve others outside. —(Substance of a discourse given by Swami Madhavananda at the Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, on Sunday 28th July, at 6 p.m.)

## SCIENCE AND ART IN THE TANTRAS

**Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar, M.A., Ph.D.**, is the author of *Comparative Studies in the Vedanta, System of Vedantic thought and Culture, Mysticism in the Bhagavadgita, Hindu Mysticism According to the Upanishads, Eastern Lights*, and other thoughtful works. A few years ago he visited the important centres of learning in Europe, on invitation, to interpret the cultural ideals of India. This is the third instalment of a series of his articles on the Mysticism of the Tantras appearing in *The Vedanta Kesari*.—Ed.

Mysticism, since it reflects the whole of life, is at once science, art, and philosophy. This is especially true of the Tantras. As science it advances fine psychology of our make-up, probing deeper into its formations, unearthing the forces that array themselves in the different strata of existence from the physical to the spiritual. The knowledge of these forces, their interconnexion and interdependence are necessary to set and establish definite tunes in our being and to give them a spiritual turn.

The Tantras study the vital, the physiological and the psychic composition of our being for not understanding their individual nature, but to reflect their bearing upon the total nature of our being. These forces are studied not in isolation, but in the context of our total being. The forces are studied not in abstract, but in concrete setting especially in their influence upon the interest and expression of life.

Naturally the scientific analysis of the forces is not that with which the final satisfaction can be attained. One must show how do they gather up to serve the higher ends of life and spirit—how do they become the idea through which the spirit can react upon the mental, the vital, and the physical world. The Tantras trace the connexion of the vital, the physiological and psychical forces of our being with the spiritual and the mental force; for according to them matter, life, and mind are expressions of the immanent spirit in the ascending order. Spirit is the ultimate reality, but in its descent it suffers in expression and appears as mind, life, and matter. Hence in the mystical life, it is necessary to note the complex make-up of man, in order that the whole being of man can be brought under the direct influence of spirit to recover consciousness in every part of our being and to directly put them under the influence and inspiration of spirit. The mysticism of the Tantras has, therefore, this speciality that it is the study of the concrete man, and does never forget this central point; it traces the connexion between the concrete man and the whole universe in its fine and gross aspects, and traces out the correspondence between the micro-

cosm and macrocosm. Man represents the universe in miniature and reflects the centre of cosmic existence. When this is forgotten, the intrinsic interest is lost. Man is studied in the cosmic setting. The universe is an organic existence, man is the prototype of this organic existence.

This correspondence advances a finer analysis of the forces composing our being and points to the direct relation between the inner and the outer not only in their surface but in their deeper levels of conspiring. Subtle forces array themselves. The mysticism that is presented in the Tantras has to its advantage this wide knowledge of astral energies that silently give shape to our psychic and vital being. These astral forces are in direct connexion with the higher forces of intelligence and spirit. The Tantras make a searching analysis of the seen and unseen forces that are active in us. The Tantras localize them in the different parts of our being and find out the most sensitive parts of our nature where their presence and functions can be directly felt. This is the scientific aspect that the Tantras present.

This wide knowledge of the subtle forces has its bearing upon the art of life. This art essentially consists in modulating the life-forces to produce the harmony in our being which endows us with rare knowledge. The perfect art of life is to harmonize all the forces in us, and to remove all obscurities. The former establishes the finer tune, the latter sets aside the distributing forces. The conflicts and the incongruities are discordant with the spiritual existence. By the superior knowledge of the forces in our nature, by the fine modulation of

our being the Tantras make it responsive to the finer layers of existence and finer forces functioning therein, and make them active in us so that life may grow in beauty, harmony, power, and transcendence. This art is most difficult of all. It is the art of re-orienting our being which can make us feel and receive the inrush of the spirit force. There is an equilibrium in our being, which is, at times, disturbed by the immanent urge of growth. Every higher stage in evolution restores the equilibrium. It is indeed interesting to note that the spiritual art in the Tantras, while seeking to make the spiritual evolution advanced, keeps up the divinity of measure; for at every step of evolution and expression this divinity of measure is better established in as much as it gets access to the wider harmony of being. In the intermediate stages the harmony and the equilibrium are disturbed for the attainment of the wider harmony. The divinity of measure is, again, restored in a higher plane. The spiritual art is essentially an act, an act which can invigorate our being in all its parts, and throw light even in the remotest part of our being and the darkest part of nature to rejuvenate them and transform them and to establish in them the divine treat and measure. The greatest art is the art of transformation of our nature. It is really re-creation, re-shaping our original crude working impulses of nature into diviner shapes and beautiful forms. This is why spirituality is so much valued. It reveals the genial currents of the soul. It makes life beat with new harmonies. It fills with graces.

The Tantras advance the art of spiritualizing the whole life by dis-

covering the central being and by connecting it with the centre of life, force, light, knowledge, and power, invigorating our whole being with spiritual force. It vibrates the deeper chords of our being in order that the most potent spiritual force may be awakened and be activated in us. Science gives the knowledge of the forces; art discovers their integration in the total setting and uses them to establish creative harmony and perfect poise in order that wider amplitudes in consciousness and knowledge can be obtained. In this sense the Tantras are the greatest spiritual discipline to evoke the finer powers and to move them in finer rhythms passing into the wide stretches of knowledge and consciousness. The Tantras do not indulge in abstract thought; the advance in spiritual realization at every step is followed by the concrete adaptation in life, especially in the moulding of our concrete being. The formation of the concrete being is imperatively necessary, in as much as the highest spiritual Truth is not only to be thought, but to be assimilated and made dynamic in us. The spiritual realization has, therefore, to present not only the abstract truths in the setting of entire life but to assimilate them in the life-process. The hidden forces and potentialities become creative and our personalities attain supra-mental heights of expression and evolution. The divinity of measure overtakes our being. The higher scale of our concrete being is crossed. The spiritual art gives the divine philosophy or wisdom. Philosophy in the Tantras is divine *sapientia* not intelligible in the terms of the intellect, for it surpasses intellect and emanates from centres far higher than intellect. But none the

less it is wisdom. It can easily appraise the different formations of our being, their setting and their emergence and withdraw into the central being and the final freedom of consciousness from the turns and twists of our life and being, and its final emergence as one with the Absolute. The Tantras by the spiritual art establish definite harmonies in the different parts of our being revealing new orders and movements of consciousness, finally revealing the Great Truth of the ineffable silence which is the supreme fact of existence. This way it gives a kind of divine philosophy not halting at each stage with a definite experience and attempting partial constructions, but entering straight into the heart of reality, transcending every partial revelation, the half truths and the side-lights. It gives supramental lights and truths and avoids mentation regarding Truth. When the light of revelation reaches, the need of reflection does not arise. The Tantras develop the power of seeing Truth, and their art is to equip our faculties so that the direct envisagement of Truth may be possible. The art is here revelation. The Tantras along with the Samkhya and the Vedanta claim revelation as the highest source of knowledge, and revelation comprises not only the knowledge of the ultimate Truth, but also the knowledge of the creative process. The whole is flashed before us.

Art and Philosophy go together in the Tantras. Art is creative. It is also revelatory. It gives the definite spiritual attitude which can easily quicken up the forces sleeping in us and make them serviceable in the life of complete realization. The Tantras rely upon it to vouchsafe divine

wisdom. Philosophy is, here, the envisagement of the complete truth directly and immediately without the long process of ratiocination. The Tantras indeed avoid intellectual philosophy which takes its hold upon experience and raises a construction upon it. The spiritual philosophy of the Tantras goes deeper, it modulates our psychic being which presents the wider and finer experiences and the composition of the forces which regulate our complex being. It probes deeper; and one not accustomed with its spiritual art naturally is not in a position to correctly understand and promptly evaluate the subtle forces which the Tantras discover and to follow their internal and external correspondence. The Tantras give an occult art and esoteric philosophy, .... a perfect seeing of the forces operating in creation. In its final envisagement of truth which transcends both the scientific deciphering of forces and the artistic modulations of being, it gives profound knowledge of being and becoming, and endows us with rare intuitions and divine imagination which displace our limited vision and endow us with power of spiritual construction. The superb beauty of the Tantric wisdom lies in acquainting us with the spiritual architecture of the world, the immanent radiant forces and the divine conspiring in the heart of existence. The divine *sapientia* includes within it all the formative forces, the creative harmonies, the wider synthesis, as well as, the inscrutable silence and ineffable peace. Transcendence and creativeness are blended in life of spirit and the Tantras take due regard of both; and hence in the art of life, the Tantras exhibit the deeper insight into spiritual life. To fix the

spiritual ideal and objective to Transcendence is really to forget the charm of life in spirit. Spirit is appreciated most in its dignity and beauty when it is exhibited in its polarization and its linking up Heaven and Earth.... when it is intuited not in its sublime silence, but in its most meaningful expression through the concrete formation of life in every plane of its expression. Spiritual life, besides its transcendent sublimity, has its expression in Count Keyserling's phrase 'Terrestrial gravity'. It gives a more pronounced impression of spirituality because it gives expression to the spirit through the tide of events and through the concrete formations. The Tantras in emphasizing the creative expression of spirit has introduced an additional charm into life and discovered spiritual meaning in life's urges and spiritual beauty in life's formation. It gives a new meaning, a new vesture to life's creative urge, which appears profounder because of the spiritual significance it manifests.

The exquisite artistic display is exhibited when the spirit releases the

sleeping creative forces and activate them in all the strata of our being ....mental, vital, and sub-vital, and ultimately infuse them with higher force and start a new re-orientation of our being. It is indeed a fine art to make these forces active in order that Heaven can react upon Earth and gradually instill into its influence and inspiration. This is the greatest spiritual venture, the finest expression of creative act of spirit. The spirit cannot allow the total suspension of the creative activity, and naturally it must discover the forces which can help to remove the obstruction of matter in order that the creative expression in life may be impregnated with spirit. The occult science and the occult art go together. The knowledge of the forces suggest the clue to their regulation. Life emerges out in its dignity and beauty. Nothing crude and ugly can be left in it. The movement becomes graceful, the being becomes transparent and luminous. Man is exhibited as a supreme specimen of the divine art in creation, angelic in form and movement.

M. N. SIRCAR

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF EXPERIENCE

In this article a lucid and brief account of the highest Advaitic conception is given by **Swami Prabhavananda**, the Head of the Vedanta Centre, Hollywood, U.S.A. It forms a section of his projected work on Indian Religion and Philosophy, the first part of which has already appeared in India and very well received by the learned and the Press.—  
Ed.

To arrive at the ultimate truth, philosophy must consider not only

our experiences in the waking state but also those in other states of consciousness, such as dream and dreamless sleep, and co-ordinate them by extending its enquiry to the possible source of all consciousness. Gaudapada and the Upanishadic Rishis make this very attempt, that is, they base their enquiry upon the totality of human experience. Mr. V. Subrahmanya Iyer rightly remarks of Gaudapada, 'His distinction lies in the emphasis he lays on the impossibility

of reaching the highest truth unless the totality of human experience or knowledge be taken into consideration.' <sup>1</sup>

Western philosophy, on the other hand, seems to have run into a blind alley, not only because it fails to recognize the transcendental consciousness, but also because it does not attempt to co-ordinate the three other states of consciousness. 'Philosophy, according to Gaudapada and Samkara,' writes Mr. Subrahmanya Iyer, 'is an interpretation of the totality of human experience or the whole of life from the standpoint of truth. Philosophy, therefore, is the whole, of which Religion, Mysticism (Yoga), Theology, Scholasticism, Art, and Science are but parts. Such philosophy or Vedanta as ignores any part or parts is no Vedanta. And the object sought by philosophy, as these two pre-eminent Hindu philosophers say, is the happiness (*Sukham*) and welfare (*Hitam*) of all beings (*Sarva Sattva*) in this world (*Ihaiva*).'

In analysing the three states of consciousness, waking, dreaming, and dreamless sleep, Gaudapada discovers an unchangeable reality as the witness behind all experiences. For in all these states there is the Self ever-present, though remaining by itself unknown. Behind the changing flow of all experiences there remains the eternal Atman as the unchangeable witness. We may recall how Indra approaching Prajapati to learn about the truth of the Self, and how being questioned by the teacher to analyse the three states, the disciple first mistook the non-self (body, senses, and

mind) for the Self but discovered eventually that these are changeable, are the *instruments* of the Seer and not the Seer himself. The *Mandukya Upanishad*, upon which Gaudapada builds his philosophy, proceeds to analyse these three states of consciousness and indicates that their source, the Atman, is an ever-present but unchangeable consciousness behind changing experience. The Atman is the experiencer, the witness of all actions and thoughts in all the three states, but is never affected by them. It forever remains pure, free, perfect, and unchangeable.

Through ignorance, however, the Atman becomes identified with experiences and appears to be changing, as when it appears happy or miserable or has birth and death. But these changes are appearances only, the Atman remaining unaffected and unchangeable. When we rise above and beyond the three states which is the Turiya or the Pure Consciousness, when the experiences of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep are annihilated, then is revealed the non-dual, the unchangeable Atman, for then there is no more false identification of Self with non-Self.

It is true that in deep sleep all experiences seem to be annihilated. What then is the difference between deep sleep and Turiya? In the words of Gaudapada, 'Prajna (deep sleep) does not know anything of the Self or the non-Self, nor truth, nor untruth. But Turiya is ever existent and ever all-seeing.' Again he says: 'Dream is the wrong cognition of reality. Sleep is a state in which one does not know what reality is. When the false experience in these two states disappear Turiya is realised.' He makes a clear distinction between a

<sup>1</sup> 'Foreward' to Swami Nikhilananda's translation of, the *Mandukya Upanishad* with Gaudapada's *Karika*.

man who is asleep and a soul illumined in Turiya in the following verses: 'In deep sleep the mind is withdrawn. But the mind is disciplined and not withdrawn in Turiya. One whose mind is thus disciplined becomes one with Brahman, Who is fearless and the light of Whose knowledge illumines every direction.'

The real Self, the ultimate Reality, remains unknown in the three states of consciousness. 'When, however,' says Gaudapada, 'the individual soul sleeping under the influence of Maya (ignorance) is awakened, he then realizes the non-duality, beginningless and dreamless.'

The Atman, as we know, is immortal in that It has neither birth nor death. It is non-dual, though It appears to be many because of adjuncts, just as the one sun, reflected in many lakes, appears manifold. Describing the nature of the Atman, Gaudapada says, 'This Atman is beyond all expression by words, beyond all acts of mind. It is all peace, eternal effulgence, free from activity, and attainable when the mind becomes pure and tranquil.'

Gaudapada, like all the saintly philosophers of India, points out the way of illumination within one's own soul. With patience and perseverance, we should seek to control the vagaries of the mind; then through the practice of discrimination, we must learn to renounce the pleasures of the senses; and finally, by the practice of concentration and meditation, when we are quite absorbed in our devotions we arrive at a kind of bliss, a lower stage of Samadhi. We must also, Gaudapada insists, give up our attachment to this bliss if we would realize the

supreme bliss. My master, Swami Brahmananda, used also to tell us that we must not stop with the bliss we may find in deep contemplation but go deeper and deeper. In the words of Gaudapada: 'The mind should not be allowed to enjoy the bliss that arises out of the condition of absorption. It should be freed from attachment to such happiness through the exercise of discrimination. When the mind does not merge in the inactivity of oblivion, or become distracted by desires, that is to say, when the mind becomes quiescent and does not give rise to appearances, it verily becomes Brahman. This highest bliss is based upon the realization of Self; it is peace identical with liberation, indescribable, and unborn. It is further described as the omniscient Brahman, because it is one with the unborn Self which is the object sought by knowledge.'

Gaudapada contends that the waking and the dreaming states are equally real and equally unreal. They are real only in a relative sense, and they are unreal as compared with the transcendental, the Turiya, which is the ultimate Reality, the unchangeable Self. The definition of Reality is that it is never contradicted at any time but persists for ever. 'Anything which is non-existent at the beginning and is so also at the end, necessarily does not exist in the middle.' By this test, all experiences of both dreaming and waking are unreal. And from the standpoint of the ultimate Reality, experiences of the waking state are but prolonged dreams. Shakespeare seems to have caught, poetically, a sense of the dream-like quality of this world of appearances in his famous lines in the *Tempest*.



'these our actors,  
 As I foretold you, were all spirits,  
 and  
 Are melted into air, into thin air:  
 And, like the baseless fabric of this  
 vision,  
 The cloud-capp'd towers, the gor-  
 geous palaces,  
 The solemn temples, the great globe  
 itself,  
 Yea, all which it inherit, shall dis-  
 solve,  
 And, like this insubstantial pageant  
 faded,  
 Leave not a rack behind. We are  
 such stuff  
 As dreams are made on, and our  
 little life  
 Is rounded with a sleep.'

A parable told by Sri Ramakrishna  
 is also to the point: 'A man lost his  
 only son. But he was keeping calm  
 and no grief perturbed him. When the  
 mother asked him how he could keep  
 calm when such a calamity befell  
 them, he replied, "Last night in a  
 dream I became a king and I had  
 seven sons, and in the dream I lost  
 one by one all my sons, and lost my  
 kingdom as well. Now I do not know  
 whether to grieve for this son who  
 died or for the seven sons I lost last  
 night".

Consistent with his philosophy of  
 non-dualism, Gaudapada did not  
 believe in the absolute reality of  
 creation. The one absolute non-  
 dual Self, or God, neither created  
 this universe nor did He become this  
 universe. In reality there is no crea-  
 tion, for the One Infinite Existence  
 appears as the manifold universe just  
 as a rope may appear as a snake.  
 Thus the universe is not a reality but  
 a superimposition on the Atman.

What philosophy we find in Gau-  
 dapada is a seed-form which later

developed in Samkara into a gigantic  
 and beautiful fruit-bearing tree. We  
 may now devote a few remarks to  
 answering Gaudapada's critics.

Gaudapada says: 'There is no  
 death, no birth, none in bondage, none  
 aspiring for knowledge, no 'seeker of  
 liberation, and none liberated. This  
 is the absolute truth.' Sir S. Radha-  
 krishnan remarks: 'The general idea  
 pervading Gaudapada's work, that  
 bondage and liberation, the individual  
 soul and the world, are all unreal,  
 makes the caustic critic observe that  
 the theory which has nothing better to  
 say than that an unreal soul is trying  
 to escape from an unreal bondage in  
 an unreal world to accomplish an un-  
 real supreme good, may itself be an  
 unreality.'

Now if one fails to take into con-  
 sideration the main argument of  
 Gaudapada, the above criticism may  
 apply. What is his main argument?  
 The highest good, that is, freedom,  
 supreme bliss, is the very nature of  
 the Atman, an absolute reality which  
 persists. The supreme good, there-  
 fore, is not, as the caustic critic Sir  
 S. Radhakrishnan has in mind con-  
 tends, unreal, but something you  
 already have. To seek to achieve  
 something that you already have is  
 foolish fancy. To think that you do  
 not have something, though you  
 always have it, is delusion. The  
 illustration is given of a man who has  
 a towel on his shoulder but seeks for  
 the towel everywhere. He but needs  
 to wake himself to the fact that the  
 towel is where he placed it. So it is  
 with us. We think that we are  
 bound; we seek liberation, though the  
 liberation we seek is already within  
 us. We but need to awake from the  
 sleep of ignorance to realize, 'I am

**Brahman** '. It is untrue that we are either bound or must seek liberation.

The criticism in the same context runs further: 'If we have to play the game of life, we cannot do so with the conviction that the play is a show and all the prizes in it mere blanks. No philosophy can consistently hold such a view and be at rest with itself. The greatest condemnation of such a theory is that we are obliged to occupy ourselves with objects, the existence and value of which we are continually denying in theory.'

To this our reply is a question whether we can play the game of life well if we take life itself as a reality. The game is then no longer a game but a burden. Only to a real Yogi, who has seen life as a mere play, is it possible to play the game of life. To him the prizes are not blanks but the bliss of a free soul. We can play the game of life well only when we recognize the fact that the game is not everlasting, that joys and sorrows

are in their very nature impermanent. Such a player alone remains unaffected and tranquil. Such a Yogi enjoys the game, plays it in a better equipped manner than does the one who clings to the enjoyments of life and finds to his despair that they elude his grasp at every moment, howsoever he may 'bid the clouds to stay'. Howsoever one may try to fool oneself by asserting the reality of the world, there is no world when life ends in death. As one holds fast to life and its experiences, the prizes in the game become mere blanks. The fact is that Gaudapada does not in any way reveal a romantic desire to chase the shadows of life nor does he attempt to hide his head in the sand. Rather does he boldly seize upon naked reality and fearlessly face the facts of life by rising above them, above life and death, above joys and sorrows into the realization, 'I am Brahman'.

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

## THE LAW OF KARMA

In the following paragraphs **Mr. Anilbaran Roy** maintains that since the law of Karma, in its operation, cannot obtain mathematical precision, as that assumption would lead to the contingency of presupposing sin in a Socrates or a Christ, whose suffering was evidently unmerited, we shall have to supplant this crude conception of the law, demanding strict retribution, by the theory that such exceptions can be possible due to the evolutionary needs of souls choosing, of their own accord, circumstances suitable for their special purposes. While admitting that this emendation helps to remove the seeming absurdities of the law

of Karma, it is not possible, nevertheless, to overlook the difficulties evolved in it. If the soul in its essential nature, is an agent subjected to pleasure and pain, it is inconceivable why it should commit itself, by its own choice, to an evolutionary process involving painful circumstances for its self-realization. Why not adopt agreeable measures alone? What, again, is the superstition involved in postulating that the same power responsible for the working of the entire Nature is responsible also for the incidence of suffering and joy according to the ethical merits and demerits of each case, taking into account the whole past history of the trans-

migrating entity? If the present mind did not exist in the previous life, how are we to understand the statement that the soul carries away with it in a subtle body the experiences and impressions of the past lives? Is this subtle body the same as the one proposed by the ancient Sankhyas, composed of the mind, senses, and the five subtle elements, which according to them would not perish till the final release of the soul is attained? If not, what is its composition? If mind, too, like the body, is picked up then and there for the purpose of its own evolution by the soul, why the soul, conscious of its purpose, should choose defective instruments at times? The soul being an eternal and immortal portion of the Divine descended into terrestrial life to manifest its divine powers, are we to accept that its joys and sufferings are a manifestation of inherent divine power? If suffering is a manifestation of its intrinsic nature, why should it seek salvation or evolution at all? Perhaps it is after anticipating these and similar other difficulties that certain schools of thought hypothesized the unchanging identity in man to be the inmost Self, neither agent nor enjoyer but pure Intelligence, and relegated the entire process of evolution to the changing aspect of the reality conceived as either a unity or a duality. The Advaitin's concept of Maya takes for granted the inscrutableness of the laws of Nature and their operation, including the law of Karma and the contradictions involved therein. 'Who knows what is there in the treasure of Mahamaya?' exclaimed Sri Ramakrishna once when this knotty problem was posed to him. Mr. Roy has raised a very interesting question and we hope the learned would take it up and clarify further.—Ed.

WHENEVER we do anything, we bring about some changes in ourselves as well as in universal Nature; the effect on ourselves is preserved in the subconscious, and it influences the course of our life, the development and evolution of our nature. It is from this subconscious that our memory brings out things done or experienced in the past; even when they are not remembered, our past actions continue to influence our life and conduct. In the same manner Nature preserves the impressions of all actions in the universal subconscious; they also exercise a potent influence in the universal movement. This is the universal chain of cause and effect; the law of Karma. Physical science is formulating this law in the physical plane, observing the phenomena of physical Nature; but this law also holds good in the vital and mental planes, though the working there is different and much more complex.

Spiritual experience shows that when a man dies, his body perishes; but the soul, the psychic entity in him, survives and carries away with it in a subtle body the experiences and impressions of the past life. After taking some rest in the psychic plane and assimilating the past experiences, it takes up a new birth in a new body suitable to its further evolution. In this new life it has to work out many of the effects of its past Karma: and this is what is generally known as *karmaphala*. The Soul is eternal and immortal, a portion of the Divine; but it descends into terrestrial life to manifest some of its divine powers and possibilities under the conditions of material existence. It is these possibilities that it develops through many lives and

various personalities, and the machinery by which this is done is the law of Karma, which is ultimately determined by its own way of becoming, *svabhavas tu pravartate* (*Gita*, V: 14).

The ordinary notion about *karma-phala* is that if a man commits sin he will have to suffer for it, and that virtuous acts will bring rewards for him. That there is some truth in this is amply proved by experience even in this life, and for this we need not assume the existence of rebirth or after-life. But the exact operation of this law is not known, and it is a crude belief that our sins and virtues bring punishments or rewards with mathematical precision. There are too many exceptions to the rule that sin brings punishment and virtue reward. 'Attila and Jenghiz on the throne to the end, Christ on the cross and Socrates drinking his potion of hemlock are not very clear evidence for any optimistic notion of a law of moral return in the world of human nature.' But that does not altogether invalidate the law of Karma; it only shows that we do not know all the forces that are operating, and therefore cannot formulate the law correctly. Even the laws of physical Science are now recognized as being nothing more than of a statistical nature, and they have continually to be changed and modified in the light of fresh experience and knowledge. Still they are of great practical utility; so also is the Law of Karma which greatly enhances the sense of our responsibility.

There is evidently a substantial truth behind the current notions of Karma, but it is a part only of the whole. The vital being demands

success and it is not clear what morality has to say in the affair, since we see in most things that it is a right understanding and intelligent or intuitive practice of the means and conditions, and an insistent power of the settled drive of the force of the being of which success is the natural consequence. The creation of moral conditions for world's prizes seems to be an artificial imposition which impoverishes the free play of the mind force and the life force. But in truth the greatest force for success is a right concentration of energy, *tapasya*, and there is an inevitable moral element in *tapasya*. The moral is not the sole element; still there is always a moral element among the many factors of individual and collective or national success, and a disregard of acknowledged right has at some time or other disastrous or fatal reactions.

The notion that all our sufferings are due to our past sins is very crude. Take the case of an earthquake, a train disaster, or a shipwreck in which hundreds of thousands of men, women and children perish. Is it to be inferred that all of them acted in the same manner in their previous birth? That is reducing the law of Karma to absurdity. 'The universe', says Sri Aurobindo, 'is not solely an ethical proposition, a problem of the antinomy of the good and the evil; the Spirit of the universe can in no way be imagined as a rigid moralist concerned only with making all things obey the law of moral good, or a stream of tendency towards righteousness attempting, hitherto with only a very poor success, to prevail and rule, or a stern Justice rewarding and punishing creatures in a world that he has made or has suffered

to be full of wickedness and suffering and evil. The universal Will has evidently many other and more supple modes than that, an infinity of interests, many other elements of its being to manifest, many lines to follow, many laws and purposes to pursue. The law of the world is not this alone that our good brings good to us and our evil brings evil, nor is its sufficient key the ethical-hedonistic rule that our moral good brings to us happiness and success and our moral evil brings to us sorrow and misfortune. There is a rule of right in the world, but it is the right of the truth of Nature and of the truth of the Spirit, and that is a vast and various rule and takes many forms that have to be understood and accepted before we can reach either its highest or its integral principle.

'The will in the intellectual being may erect knowledge and truth of knowledge as the governing principle of the Spirit, the will in the volitional being may see Will or Power as very God, the will in the aesthetic being enthrone beauty and harmony as the sovereign law, the will in the ethical being have a vision of it as Right, or Love or Justice, and so on through a long chapter. But even though all these may very well be supreme aspects of the Supreme, it will not do to shut up the acts of the Infinite into one formula. And for a beginning it is best to phrase the law of Karma as generally and vaguely as may be, and put it simply thus without any particular colour or content that according to the energy put forth shall be its return. not with any mathematical precision of conscious will and its mechanical consequences, but subject to the complicated working of many world forces.'

Natural calamities like earthquakes occur according to fixed laws of Nature and only those suffer who come in the way of the working of these laws. If you put your hand into fire it will be burnt; if you knock your head against a stone wall it will be broken; there is no question of sin or virtue here. The physical law is the right, the justice, the duty, the ought, of the physical world. No law or Karma, the moral law included, could exist if there were not, to begin with, this principle as the first foundation of order. The one 'sin' of which all persons involved in a natural disaster is guilty, is the ignorance of the laws and operations of Nature. Coming events cast their shadow before, and even animals are known to have a sense by which they can protect themselves from coming dangers. Man can develop faculties of vision and work by which he can become complete master of Nature, and that is Nature's intention, *ihaiva tairjitah sargah*. (*Gita*, V: 19). All these calamities of Nature are a peremptory call to man to perfect himself in knowledge and power. Already by developing scientific knowledge, man has advanced far in this direction; but this knowledge has to be supplemented and perfected by occult and spiritual knowledge.

Referring to the universal reason or Logos working behind these calamities, Sri Aurobindo says: 'Its presence, when felt by the cruder kind of religious mind, generates the idea of calamity as a punishment for sin,—not observing that it has a punishment too for ignorance, for error, stupidity, weakness, defect of will and *tapasya*. This is really a resistance of the Infinite acting through life against the claim of the imper-

fect ego of man to enlarge itself, possess, enjoy and have, while remaining imperfect, a perfect and enduring happiness and complete felicity of its world-experience. The claim is, we may say, immoral, and the Force that resists it and returns, however uncertainly and late to our eyes, suffering and failure as a reply to our imperfections, may be considered a moral Force, an agent of a just Karma, thought not solely in the narrowly ethical sense of Karma. The law it represents is that our imperfections shall have their passing or their fatal consequences, that a flaw in our output of energy may be mended or counterbalanced and reduced in consequence, but if persisted in, shall react even in excess of its apparent merits, that an error may seem to destroy all the result of the *tapasya*, because it springs from a radical unsoundness in the intention of the will, the heart, the ethical sense or the reason. This is the first line of terrestrial law of Karma.'

Our sufferings or enjoyments belong to physical, vital, or mental plane; but this body, life or mind, which suffers now, did not exist in my previous birth. Why, then, shall the sins or virtues pass on from birth to birth? As a matter of fact, it is the soul which suffers or enjoys; the body, the life, the mind are only its instruments; it keeps, or discards, or changes them according to its inner needs of evolution. So it is the same soul personality which suffers or enjoys on account of acts done in a previous birth. But it is a popular ignorance which supposes that somebody judges our action and distri-

butes suffering and enjoyment with mathematical precision. Sufferings and enjoyments are determined according to the needs of our evolution. The soul sometimes invites suffering as a short cut to spiritual progress. Blindness, lameness, insanity, these may be the devices of Nature to work out quickly some effects of our past work which were standing on the way of the evolution of the soul. In finding true forms of self-expression, the soul has often to make all sorts of experiments; some of these may have disastrous consequences and have to be worked out by intense physical and mental suffering. This may seem to be a terrible necessity, this chain of Karma; but the soul has accepted it of its own accord; it is a rule or law of the game which it has agreed to play. Man's nature is what it is because he has so made it by his past; he may change what he has made. 'His past and his present nature and the environment he has secured may present constant obstacles, but they must yield in the end to the evolutionary will in him in proportion to its sincerity, wholeness, and insistence. All the possibility of the All-being is in him; all the power of the All-Will is behind him. This evolution and all its circumstances, its life, its form, its events, its values arise out of that urge and are shaped according to the past, present or future active will of his spirit. As is his use of the energy, so was and will be the return of the universal energy to him now and hereafter. This is the fundamental meaning of Karma.' (Sri Aurobindo).

ANILBARAN ROY

## NON-VIOLENCE

The following paragraphs are from the notes of Swami Yatiswarananda's class talks in Germany, given in December, 1933.—Ed.

### I

If you practise Ahimsa (non-violence) out of cowardice it is no merit at all. Real non-violence means the greatest strength and power of endurance a human being can attain to. It means the greatest courage coupled with the greatest love. If there is the slightest trace of aversion or hatred it is not non-violence.

When you lead the higher life, do not stand in any body's way; do not preach hatred or aversion against anybody, sinner or saint; do not trample under foot anybody, whoever he be. Do not elbow out others; do not sacrifice the interests of others for the sake of your interests or the interests of those who are dear to you. In the animal kingdom struggle (the so-called survival of the fittest) is necessary; but if we wish to be men, we must go beyond the laws prevailing in the animal kingdom and in nature. We must have the idea of love and non-injury in thought, word, and deed. We must not be swayed by our impulses; we must rise above attraction and aversion, and learn to be and to remain as the witness of everything.

The ideal of the spiritual man should be, not how to stand in anybody's way; not how to enslave anybody; for his is not the ideal of animal existence. He has to rise above all the laws of the animal king-

dom. If he does not do so, he will never become a man. He must always be prepared to help others, even at the greatest sacrifice. He must never allow himself to be used by others for their selfish interests.

Ahimsa is the highest goal. We must proceed step by step. Physically as well as mentally Ahimsa is to be practised. The mind must be cleansed of all impure impulses and thoughts. We can have real Ahimsa only if we really advance. The ideal of Ahimsa and the full realization of Ahimsa in our own life are very widely apart. So we must consciously proceed in the right direction; and learn to analyse all our motives and impulses in whatever garb they come.

At a higher stage you develop such a soul-force that people dare not take advantage of you. Do not be soft or sentimental when the Principle is involved. Do not yield, whatever happens. We must learn to compromise less and less. The higher goal should never be lost sight of. We do not want to make a virtue of softness or bonelessness; but we have to fight all ideas of violence in our nature. Ahimsa does not mean softness. The world is so impure and so bad that you cannot live in it if you do not go on hissing. But the limit of hissing should never be passed.

### II

Until your power of discrimination increases, never lose your balance. At least, do so only mentally, never give expression to it.

Whenever any tempting thought arises with reference to lust, anger,

passion, etc., do not give it any physical expression and carefully avoid coming in touch with the object that makes it rise in your mind. Try to calm the mind, withdraw the mind steadily from all sense-objects. If you give such a thought or impulse a physical expression, it becomes very difficult for you to erase it again. Everything remains recorded in your mind, and so it creates no end of troubles for the aspirant who has to efface all such impressions before he can really progress in the spiritual path. You will be astonished to find how many bad impressions will rise during your practices, impressions you have never been even aware of before.

'Whenever desires and passions, anger and hatred, and other feelings trouble you, sit down quietly without paying any heed to them.'

If some wish arises in your mind which you know to be wrong as it stands in the way of your mental purification, annihilate it by giving your mind a different direction. Do not fulfil that wish. If you do, new impressions will be created which will make it all the more difficult to efface even the old ones. Freedom does not mean following one's desires and impulses, but freedom means being the master in one's own house, physical and mental, and

teaching all such desires a good lesson, so that they dare not come again and trouble one. None who follows his wishes and impulses and desires and gives in to them is free. But most people do not even realize the state of slavery they live in.

### III

Do not have useless discussion. Do not have useless reading. Do not see useless things. Do not meet others uselessly. Discussions very rarely are of any use unless the people you are discussing with really want to change their ways of thinking. 'Only that kind of discussion that helps us to arrive at the Truth can be had recourse to, but not to others,'—this was Sri Ramakrishna's advice in this respect.

If you are careless in all this, one day you will find that you must pay a heavy price for your carelessness. But then it will be too late to escape paying it to the full. Spiritual life without mental control, without curbing one's desires and wishes and passions, becomes an impossibility. Spiritual life without becoming free from the trammels of all such desires, of attraction and aversion, of violence and hatred, and of possessive personal love, just remains an empty dream. Nothing more.

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**Sabara-Bhashya Vol. III: TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY MM. DR. GANGANATH JHA. PUBLISHED AS NO. 73 OF THE GARGKAWD'S ORIENTAL SERIES UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF H. H. THE MAHARAJA GARGKAWD OF BARODA. PRICE RS. 16. PAGES 1417-2429. COPIES TO BE HAD OF THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, BARODA.**

This volume completes Dr. Jha's monumental translation of the Sabara-Bhashya and covers chapters nine, ten, eleven, and twelve of Jaimini's *Purvamimamsa Sūtras* or *Dvadasalakshani*, dealing with Uha, Badha, Tantra, and Prasanga respectively.

The Brahmanas, or the entire portion of the Veda leaving out Mantra portion, embody the accumulated wisdom and speculations of generations of Hindu divines. As a literature they might have risen as a floating mass of single discourses or dicta on various points of ceremonial worship ascribed to individual teachers and handed down orally from generation to generation. Single discourses of this kind were called Brahmanas either because they were intended to guide the priests engaged in the performance of rituals (Brahmanas) or they were laid down by the superintending priest (Brahman). So the Brahmana texts give a comprehensive view of the sacrificial ceremonies which fall under four main types: 1. Regular rites such as morning and evening fire offerings, 2. Ishtis or offerings of ghee, flour-cakes, or boiled rice to chief and minor Deities, 3. Pasu or animal sacrifice to Agni, Soma, and other gods and, 4. Soma or extraction of the Soma juice and the offering of it to Gods. All these varieties of sacrifices can be performed blemishlessly only when the four necessary elements, namely, formulas to be chanted or sung (Mantra), deity to whom offerings are to be addressed (Devata), the substance and other necessities required for the performance (Dravya), and the mode of operation (Itikartavyata), are previously known. The Brahmanas are the source books which enlighten one on all these points. But due to the variety of the opinions and diversity of performance current in various Vedic schools, as well as the vast multiplicity of acts, want of full

details bearing on all of them, and absence of a scientific or systematic treatment of them the Brahmanas give room for several doubts to the sacrificer which are to be settled by proper investigation and discussion on intelligent lines. This is the office of the Mimamsa.

In the volume under review the principle of Uha or modification is discussed first, i.e., in the ninth chapter. As hinted above all the details of every sacrifice are not laid down in the Brahmanas in their respective places. For instance, according to Asvalayana there are about hundred and thirty-four Ishtis, modelled on Darsa and Purnamasa in regard to which all details are given completely. In the case of any particular sacrifice where the necessary details are not given they are borrowed from the archetype on which they are modelled according to certain laws. In so transferring the details imported into the ectypal sacrifice may not quite fit in with the details there. So to suit such exigencies certain modifications are needed. This is what is termed as Uha discussed with a wealth of details and in reference to other allied points in the ninth chapter.

The tenth chapter has for its subject-matter Badha (exclusion or annulment) and Abhyuchchaya (inclusion or aggregation). 'When one idea that has been conceived as "this is so" is on other grounds said to be wrong it is a case of Badha—and when the idea that "this is here" is accompanied by the idea "this other thing is also here" it is a case of Abhyuchchaya.' The eleventh chapter treats of Tantras and Avapa. 'That is called Tantra (common, centralized)' says Sabara, 'which does once benefits several things; e.g., one lamp lighted among several Brahmanas; and that is Avapa (uncommon, decentralized) which helps several things through repetition, e.g., the applying of sandal paste to those same several Brahmanas.' The theme of the last chapter is Prasanga or extended application. The definition of it is: 'When something done in one place is helpful in another place also it is a case of Prasanga (extended application); for instance, when the lamp lighted in the house illumines the public road also'.

It is evident from the hints given above that Mimamsa is the science of interpretation which may help several other branches of learning. Although the rules had only immediate reference to sacrificial rites they are applicable even today in the logic of thought. For a mastery of the whole of Mimamsa the study of Sabara-Bhashya is absolutely necessary. The present translation is excellent from several viewpoints. Nothing is left in doubt and every sentence of the text is rendered into English with perfect clarity and accuracy. Difficult points are elucidated by the author's own comments and those extracted from Kumarila. The translation therefore is more helpful than a mere rendering, in as much as, it functions often as a commentary for the understanding of the original. The general scheme of printing also helps one much in this respect. The divisions, subdivisions, careful punctuation, arrangement, and choice of type done with very great care—all these remove effectively many a difficulty in understanding the text. This volume contains also an introduction in which the translator has gathered some interesting details (though not final) regarding the date, place, and works of Sabara. The learned doctor rightly contends here that there has never been any justification in looking upon Mimamsa and Vedanta as two distinct systems; for the one is preliminary and the other is final Mimamsa.

Undoubtedly, these volumes of a model translation are a marvellous tribute to the industry, patience, profound scholarship, deep and disinterested love of learning, and unusual skill of the author in making perfectly clear the abstruse language and ideas of a work written about two thousand years ago. It has certainly made his name memorable in the history of Sanskrit Learning. The success of the achievement is also due to the magnificent liberality of one of the foremost royal patrons of learning and culture in India, the Gaekwad of Baroda. We heartily express our deep appreciation of this great work and highly recommend it to all libraries and to scholars who wish to get a thorough grounding in Mimamsa.

**The Upanishads (selection):** TRANSLATED BY DR. T. M. P. MAHADEVAN, M.A., Ph.D. PUBLISHED BY G. A. NATESAN & Co. PRICE Rs. 1—4—0.

This is the fifth of the Series of the condensed editions of Hindu scriptures brought out by G. A. Natesan & Co. Of this volume of selections consisting of 400 Crown Oct. pages, the first 276 pages give selections from the 13 Major Upanishads, many of which are very well-known and available in various translations and editions and studied by scholars in India and outside. The remaining minor part of the book is devoted to the Minor Upanishads, numbering about 95. The selections are made in the logical order in which they are published in the famous Adyar Upanishads Series. The Minor Upanishads treat of a variety of topics of supreme practical importance to persons genuinely interested in the spiritual quest. To do justice to the task of making a selection from them a better way perhaps would have been to assemble passages and verses under the various topics in a certain sequence. As this condensation is perhaps less than a fiftieth of the extent to which the source material runs it should not be thought that the remaining part is neither unimportant, nor insignificant. In fact one may find a veritable mine of spiritual wisdom there also. A selection, of course, does not necessarily imply the bringing together of all the outstanding passages. It may be easily admitted that as far as it goes the present volume is a good gift to simple seekers. There can be no difference of opinion regarding the excellence of the selections. The notes given with a view to link the selections as well as to give an idea of the chief contents of the Minor Upanishads are illuminating and valuable. For them as well as for the beautiful and accurate rendering into English the learned translator has deserved the warmest appreciation of all readers. We feel he would have made the selections ampler had the restriction of space not been a compelling consideration. May the wisdom contained in the Upanishads reach one and all through these laudable endeavours is our deepest wish.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Swami Madhavananda completes his Tour in the South

Having completed a very compact programme of addresses, speeches, visits, interviews, and inspection of the Math and Mission Centres, so fittingly arranged by the Public and the authorities concerned, throughout the Mysore State, Swami Madhavananda arrived at Salem on 16th July, at 8-12 p.m., and was received by the Chairman of the Municipality and other leading citizens. He was presented with an address by the Legh Bazaar Merchants' Association in their spacious hall, where the Swami unveiled a portrait of Sri Ramakrishna on the occasion, besides giving the usual reply to the address. In the same evening a public reception was accorded him by the Citizens of Salem, Padapuja was performed at the Saraswati Pathasala run under the auspices of Sri Ramakrishna Sabha, a procession was arranged, and still another address of welcome was given in a meeting presided over by Dewan Bahadur Sundaram Chettiar, Retd. High Court Judge. The next day he visited the Ramakrishna Mission Free Dispensary and gave a talk to the lady devotees in the Ashram about the life of the Holy Mother. In the evening at 6-45 p.m. he delivered another lecture on 'The Message of Vedanta' at the Literary Society Hall, during the course of which he spoke *inter alia*:

'Hinduism' does not *exactly* denote the religion of the Hindus. It is better expressed by the word Vedanta. In the Vedas, as you know, there is elaborate treatment of rituals, Yajnas, Prayers, etc.; but the term Vedanta refers to that portion which exclusively deals with the eternal principles. Vedanta is the gist of the Vedas, so far as their philosophy is concerned. The eternal principles interpreted by Vedanta are not the property of any person or group of persons. They are what the sages or Rishis discovered during the course of their spiritual quest, and out of consideration for humanity put on record. That is what is meant by the

Vedantic truths. These eternal Vedantic principles are very ancient and are not affected by the lapse of time. They will be of importance to humanity for all time; particularly at the present day when we are scientifically-minded. I can boldly assert that the Vedantic principles discovered long ago, before the dawn of civilization, will satisfy even the rationalistic minds of this scientific age.

The central fact of Vedanta is that all existence is one, though called by various names. In the face of the wonderful and bewildering multiplicity in this Universe, and in spite of the seeming dissimilarity and differences, Vedanta declares that all existence is One; only people look at it from various angles of view. The terms, Rudra, Agni, Varuna, etc., applied by various people represent only the various aspects of that One existence. This existence has been called Brahman in Vedantic books.

The word Vedanta is not synonymous with Advaita. In Vedantic philosophy there are at least two other schools, the dualistic school and the school known as qualified monism. The Advaitic school says that the human soul is not different from God or Brahman, but one with Him. Vedanta does not take its stand on reason, but on realization. Reason is only its handmaid. For Atman to be heard, reflected upon, and realized, one must at first get rid of the feeling of ego. True religion comes to us only when we have realized our oneness with God. This Universe is the effect of one principle; the same laws operate in the material, mental, and the spiritual worlds. It is through ignorance that we believe in variety and difference. Till true Samadhi comes, the veil of ignorance remains. There is but a perfectly harmonious unity; it is according to our states of mind, which differ widely and which work through the senses, that our readings of that unity differs.

Vedanta prescribes the Sadhanas according to different moulds of minds. For realizing true Samadhi (perfect concentration of thought) two things are essential; that is, self-control and concentration. When you practise self-control and succeed in it, truth will shine out. Any system of Yoga or concentration has for its object attention on one thing to the exclusion of all other things. When the mind becomes perfectly concentrated, all unreal notions are removed from the mind. There is then no consciousness of the body, nor of the senses, and nothing of the outside world remains.

Vedanta teaches that every man, however low and humbly placed, is potentially Divine—is just like a sun temporarily hidden by a cloud. The more the layers of the covering is removed, the more Divinity manifests.

There is nothing like a high or low race. If God is omnipresent, then surely we are all in Him and He is in us. That is the whole truth. The distinction is only in the degree of manifestation. In some, Brahman is more manifest, in other less. It is possible for every human being to realize the highest and manifest more of the Divinity latent in him and remove sufferings. It is like this. A peasant irrigates his field by controlling the sluices; the water that collects around on a higher level flows into the field automatically. So also by simply removing hindrance, by purifying the mind, we realize Brahman. By undergoing different disciplines more and more of the Atman will manifest itself. So even the so-called low caste people can be truly elevated by bringing out their latent Divinity. Swami Vivekananda has laid stress on this aspect of Vedanta for the uplift of the lower castes. I may tell you that nothing acts from outside; things have to be accomplished from inside, helping latent powers to come out.

Vedanta says, 'love thy neighbour as thyself'. If you try to hurt others you are hurting yourself. Only you do not feel it. But actually the truth is there. We are not yet ripe for this higher stage, but to reach this, steps are

necessary and they do not conflict with each other.

Even the worship of the Images is a step. The tottering mind of man requires every help, and Images and rituals are, psychologically speaking, very necessary for the mind to be suitably trained. From the absolute standpoint everything else is only a mirage. The universe is nothing but God. But a vast sea of ignorance envelops us. Why then deny others and deny them the help they need? The human mind wants to clutch at something in its attempt to realize God. In worshipping the Image the worshipper knows that he is conceiving of God through that Image. As his mind develops and becomes fast fixed in God, he realizes that the image is only a symbol for God, just as the photo of a father is only the symbolic likeness of the father, and not the father himself. Though a symbol, the image is necessary so long as we are not psychologically perfect.

Vedanta harmonizes everything; the same God is looked upon as possessing different forms and is called by different names. But God is one and the same.

Let everybody choose his particular path; all will reach the same goal; for all paths are different radii leading to the same centre. All are but readings of the same God or Brahman from different angles. The true solution for the differences on the path will come when we try to realize the ultimate Truth and not by merely discussing about things.

Until we find our identity with God there will be the chain of birth and death; but there is no reason to be frightened at the thought of reincarnation. Our present birth and status are the result of past Karmas and what we want to be in future is determined by our present deeds.

We will get many chances before this vicious circle of births and deaths will cease and we become identical with God. Remember that man creates his own Heaven and Hell. The Devas in Heaven also have their fall. When one truly feels identical with God, then he will realize that there are no places

like Heaven or Hell. When the light of true knowledge dawns, ignorance will vanish. A room kept dark for even thousands of years could be illuminated in a second by bringing a lamp.

Vedanta cannot find out whence this ignorance came. The moment knowledge dawns, ignorance vanishes and all is One; no world, no heaven, no hell, no souls but one Soul which is Brahman. There is no perfection in Heaven (where pleasure preponderates over pain) or in Hell (where pain preponderates over pleasure). In human life, pain and pleasure are balanced; but if we want to end it permanently, we have to break this dream; then only we shall be worthy of true freedom. It will come when we all realize the Great Truth. As rational beings, and born in India, where from time immemorial the quest has been for the Eternal Truth, it is up to everyone of us to devote at least part of our time to this supreme concern of life, and ultimately realize our unity with the Absolute.

On the 19th morning the Swami paid a visit to Mettur Dam. In the same evening he was presented with an address by the Mahajana Hindu High School, while replying to which he spoke on the practice of 'Religion in Everyday Life'. The same night he gave a talk to the devotees assembled in the Ashram, advising them to follow the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and to lead a pure and sincere life. After taking Prasada in the company of devotees the Swami left for Madras *en route* Tiruvannamalai.

\* \* \* \*

The Swami arrived in Madras on July 20, at 8 p.m. Next day morning he visited the Arvai Home and in the same evening addresses were presented to him at a meeting convened for the purpose under the Chairmanship of Rao Bahadur Dr. T. S. Tirumurthi, Principal, Stanley Medical College, at the Soundarya Mahal, 214, Govindappa Naick Street, G.T., by the parents and well-wishers of Sri Ramakrishna Girls' School and the Members of the Madras Self-Culture Association (Regd.) respectively, to which appropriate replies were given. The former address of welcome, while paying tributes to Swamiji made these statements:

Great is the sacrifice made and care taken by the Madras Math under the sacred guidance of Swami Ramakrishnanandaji, the first President of the Madras Math, for the preservation and spread of Hindu Culture and spiritual ideals. For when we were feeling the want of a Hindu School for our girls in this locality, Swami Ramakrishnanandaji came forward and helped us to start one and when it had several setbacks during its life of nearly two generations, the Math maintained it at a great sacrifice. Therefore, Holy Maharaj, we feel greatly indebted to the Math and lay our thankfulness at thy feet.

Yet there is another section of us who feel personally obliged to your holiness; for your lucid English translation of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad has been a great solace to us in our life.

In addition to this we feel specially blessed at this sacred moment; because we have heard from learned elders, that more than any kind of worship or meditation, the contact with Sadhus and saints, however short it may be, contributes greatly to the purification and spiritual evolution of us, ordinary mortals. On this account we feel our great indebtedness personally and pay our homage to you.

On the 22nd, at 5-30 p.m., a public reception was accorded to the Swami at the Gokhale Hall by the citizens of Madras. Mr. S. Satyamurti, the Mayor, was on the chair and the hall was packed to the full. The Mayor, in welcoming the Swami on behalf of the Citizens of Madras, said, 'that the Swamiji represented an illustrious line of true Karmayogins, who had shown that even in these times India could produce men who combined in themselves the highest religion and a true spirit of service to humanity. The world to-day was in a position which few of them could understand and one dreaded to think of the future "We all hope and pray" he said, "for the success of democracy over dictatorship and freedom against slavery. The war might bring in destruction to mate-

rial things but those who worked for a free India at the earliest possible moment did so not with any selfish motives but because they were convinced that a free India is the best guarantor of universal peace in the world. The *avatar* of Sri Bagavan Ramakrishna Paramahansa is proof positive that the soul of India is still sound and that India can give once more saints and seers to the world. Those of us who had read the writings and sayings of the Bagavan know that in him was revealed all the great virtues of the great *avatars*. To-day when we are fighting among ourselves, when religion has become a passport for riots and for misunderstanding, we can draw a great lesson from the life of the Paramahansa. He lived as a Hindu himself, as a Muslim, and as a Christian and realized God in all these various aspects. His life is a supreme example for the truth that God is one and that all religions are different ways to the attainment of Godhood." It would be no exaggeration to say, the Chairman continued, that Sri Ramakrishna gave Swami Vivekananda to India and Madras gave Swami Vivekananda to the world. Madras had been extraordinarily lucky in having a succession of Swamiji's who had kept the teachings of the *avatar* aloft. Thanks also to illustrious workers like Mr. C. Ramanujachariar and his late brother, Mr. Ramaswami Iyengar, the Ramakrishna Mission in this province had carried the message of Vedanta not only in the field of religion but also in other fields. The Mission here was successfully running educational institutions and dispensaries and had earned a permanent place in the heart of Madras. In conclusion, Mr. Satyamurti said, "May India be free soon and a free India send out spiritual missionaries like the guest of the evening, not as agents of an imperialistic power but as messengers of true peace on earth and goodwill to all men."

Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar then read the welcome address and

the same was presented to the Swamiji enclosed in a beautiful silver casket mounted on two nicely carved elephants. The casket was made by Messrs. Bapalal & Co.

The address among other things stated:

"It was a proud day in the history of Madras when it discovered Swami Vivekananda, and sent him to America as the ambassador of India and the exponent of Indian spirituality. Ever since that day the city has accorded the pride of place to the Ramakrishna Mission. It has readily accepted the Ramakrishna ideal of Renunciation and Service, and the many institutions that are actively functioning in the different parts of the city bear sufficient testimony to the measure of interest it has been taking in, and the amount of benefit it has derived from, the Order to which you have the privilege to belong. In honouring you, we are paying our humble tribute to Sri Ramakrishna, the greatest Prophet of Modern India who awakened this ancient land to a sense of her native majesty, and to the Order of monks and selfless workers to whom is due the spread of the Master's Gospel of Peace here as well as abroad."

The address also referred to the work done by the Swamiji in foreign lands and to his works in Sanskrit on Indian Philosophy.

Swami Madhavananda, replying to the address, said that they had rightly appraised those two spiritual giants of the modern age and Madras was specially fortunate in the discovery of the potentialities of Swami Vivekananda. "It is high time", the Swamiji said, "that in these days of stress and dire agony we pay adequate attention to the significance of the live teachings of the two great sons of India." Swami Madhavanandaji then narrated the life of Bagavan Ramakrishna Paramahansa and said that after passing through the different *sadhanas*, the great Paramahansa came to the conclusion that "God is one and

we can reach him by different paths". Paramahansa was not at all attracted by the education offered him but was longing to realize God who was not merely a name to him but one to be realized and seen.

Swami Vivekananda, he said, was the greatest disciple of Paramahansa and he carried the teachings of Vedanta to distant lands. To America he gave spiritual ideas for which there was great need. In that country the Mission was highly venerated and the American people looked upon India with great veneration as the country which produced saints.

In India, the Swamiji said, Vivekananda's work was different. In India he felt that the masses must be elevated to a level at which they could realize the true implications of religion. He found the degraded condition in which the masses lived and realized that his work here should be different. This was the genesis of the Mission's activities in the way of amelioration of the conditions of the masses, in the spirit of religion. During his tours in India and especially in South India, he found a great inequality between the upper and the lower classes. Swami Vivekananda and the workers of the Mission tried to give practical effect to the Advaitic teachings. "We believe God is present in all living forms and is not confined to temples. He lives in the hearts of devotees everywhere. We work in that belief and not in any spirit of condescension."

#### ELEVATION OF THE MASSES

Proceeding, the Swamiji said that Madras had the second best Mutt of the Mission and it had at the same time developed educational institutions, which ranked the highest in their order. The Mission was proud of these institutions. The Swamiji then gave an account of the relief work done by the Mission during famines and floods, and the number of poor who had been given medical relief by the dispensaries and hospitals run by the Mission. Their

main purpose, he said, was to reach the masses and to rouse their dormant spirituality so that at some day they might feel that they were one with God. Wherever there were sick people, it was their duty to lend a helping hand. Wherever there was illiteracy, people should try to remove that. Education enabled one to gain back his lost individuality. Wherever there was intolerance in religious matters, it should be their duty to remove them, for in the eyes of God all were equal. There should be no such term as Pariah or the untouchable. There was only a difference in the degree of manifestation of divinity.

"Already a wave of materialism was abroad", he continued, "and the attendant evils were manifest. We as Indians should never be false to our ancient ideals. We are a spiritual nation and we can give all the best in life. The western world is fast going to the abyss of atheism. But we will not be false to our ideals whether in the political, economic or the religious fields. We must and we will do all things in a spirit of religion. Our motherland is rising. The time will come when we shall be greater than we had been in the past. The West has come to appreciate the teachings of the two great masters. Time will come when they will pay more attention to these teachings and after the present crisis is passed, there will be a readjustment of the world and then is the time for India to spread her galvanic message of spirituality and Oneness of God. Prepare your minds and yourselves for that task: Wipe out all blemishes that are still trying to divide the nation. Help one and all to become united, for all are part and parcel of one Divinity."

Swami Madhavananda thanked the citizens of Madras for the kind welcome accorded to him.

Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri thanked Mr. Satyamurti and others.

On the 23rd the Swami visited Conjeevaram. On the way he alighted at

Chingleput and was received at the Ramakrishna Hindu English School, Gundur, by the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Society and other notables. He also visited the Lady Willington Leper Settlement at Tirumani where the Hindu patients received him with great joy and presented him with addresses in English and Tamil. On the same evening he arrived at Conjeevaram where a public meeting was arranged at the Pachaiyappa High School to accord him a welcome. Addresses were given in Tamil and English to which the Swami gave appropriate replies, stressing specially on the importance of the uplift of the depressed classes as service to Daridra Narayana. He also worshipped at the various famous temples in the locality as well as in the temple at Sriperumbur, the famous shrine associated with Sri Ramanujacharya, on his way back. On the 24th evening he unveiled the portraits of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda at the Ramakrishna Mission High School, Thyagarayanagar, amidst a large gathering of pupils and parents, presided over by Sir A. P. Patro. The Swami was also given an address of welcome by the teachers of the Ramakrishna Mission Schools in Madras which runs as follows:—

Revered Swamiji.

It is with feelings of great pride and joy that we, the men and women teachers of the Ramakrishna Mission Schools in Madras, are met here today to tender to you our heartfelt homage and respect. The institutions which we represent—the Residential High School at Mylapore, the Ramakrishna Mission High School at Thyagarayanagar and the Sri Sarada Vidyalya for Girls recently amalgamated with the Mission—all serve together to educate 2,500 boys and 1,500 girls and with their branch schools and hostels, they cater to a variety of needs; and we teachers engaged in the work, form a body of nearly two hundred, united by a common purpose. We deem it the greatest blessing of our life that we are privileged to serve in such a noble cause and under the banner of the greatest Saint of our day.

We look upon you, Swamiji, as one who holds aloft that banner, and as the ambassador of the sacred and spiritual

message of Service and Renunciation, the two great ideals of India, on which the edifice of our Mission has been built. The burning faith that has carried you round the world, the keen intellect that you have brought to bear upon the study and assimilation of the Hindu scriptures, the lasting service that you have rendered to the present generation and to posterity by your illuminating translations of the Upanishads and other important Sanskrit works, have all won for you a unique place in the galaxy of modern Hindu monks.

You are the embodiment of that spirit of unity for which Hinduism stands, which includes all and excludes none. As the General Secretary of the biggest Indian religious organisation of our time, you are in the front rank of the custodians of the spiritual heritage of this ancient land.

The Mission seeks unceasingly the good of the many, the happiness of the many and to serve God through the service of His creatures. Foremost among the philanthropic activities of the Mission, comes its service in the field of education, and the work in Madras occupies a very prominent place therein, having been first set on the path by the blessed hand of the great Swami Ramakrishnananda, the pioneer of the Ramakrishna movement in South India. It is our cherished dream that there will come into existence in the near future, a network of educational institutions of a new type, under the aegis of the Mission which, while answering to modern needs will keep alive the highest ideals and aspirations of the land.

Respected and beloved Swamiji, we offer our humble salutations to you and pray that under your leadership and inspiration, and under the immediate guidance of your noble lieutenants here, we may be enabled to fight out ignorance and apathy of spirit and to prove true to our calling and true to Sri Ramakrishna, who has called us to work in His vineyard.— We remain, Revered Swamiji, Ever yours in the service of the Lord, The Teachers of the Ramakrishna Mission Schools in Madras.



On the 25th he delivered the inaugural address of the Philosophical Association, Pachaiyapa's College, and also visited the Loyola College, and received an address of welcome from the pupils of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home. Next day he addressed a full meeting of the Christian College Union Society, and saw round the beautiful work done by them at Tambaram. During his stay over a week in Madras the Swami, in addition to all these activities, made the official inspection of the various institutions of the Mission in Madras and gave a number of interviews to persons who sought for it. On the 28th, Sunday, he made a speech at the Ramakrishna Math Hall, on the significance of Sri Sri Ramakrishna's Life. We have given elsewhere the substance of the speech. On 28th evening Swami Madhavanandaji left for the Headquarters by the Calcutta Mail.

#### Famine Relief in Dhrafa Thana, Kathiawar

In co-operation with the Western Kathiawar Agency the Ramakrishna Ashram, Rajkot, started famine relief in Dhrafa Thana, Kathiawar, on 1st October, 1939. At the outset the Ashram authorities formed a local Famine Relief Committee and with the help from Western Kathiawar Agency arranged to give gratuitous relief to nearly 500 poor, old, invalid and helpless persons of the whole Thana at the rate of 30lbs. of grains per head every month without any distinction of caste or creed. In December, 1939 the local Famine Relief Committee started a cattle camp in order to give shelter to stray cattle and the number of cattle at present has been nearly 200. Weaving of cloths by supplying yarn to weavers and

making of bamboo baskets were started for giving labour to Harijans. With the help from Kathiawar Harijan Seva Sangh repairing and excavation of an old tank was taken up for providing the Harijans with employment. The local committee has also made provision for giving cloths and distributing free medicines to the poor, old, and invalid people. Since the third week of January, 1940 a cheap grain shop has been opened at Dhrafa.

Cash contributions up till now.

Western Kathiawar Agency	Rs. 7959-4-9
Maharana Saheb, Porbander	Rs. 1250-0-0
Sheth Velji Kalidas, Bombay	Rs. 1001-0-0
Sankat Nivaran Samity, Porbander	Rs. 1000-0-0
Other contributions	Rs. 8106-2-0

Total Rs. 19316-6-9

#### Receipts in kind:—

The Porbander State 2500 Mds. of fodder,  
The Dharampur State 250 Mds. of grass,  
Porbander Mahajans 51 bags of jor,  
Sheth Mathuradas Vasunji, Bombay 50  
bags of bran  
Gujarat Prantik Samity one bale of cloth,  
The Morvi State has charged 8as. less  
than the original price per maund for 1200  
Mds. of wheat purchased.

As the months of May, June and July form the worst part of the famine year, the committee appeals to the generous public and charitable institutions for stretching a helping hand so that the relief activities may be successfully brought to a close at the end of July, 1940.

(Sd.) Atmawarupanand,  
President,

Famine Relief Committee,  
Dhrafa, Kathiawar.

Rajkot.

### CORRIGENDUM

On page 121 of the August issue of *The Vedanta Kesari* the sixth line of the first column repeats the third line by printers' mistake. Line six therefore needs to be corrected to: 'of the Vedic hymns with which'.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOLUME XXVII



NUMBER 6

OCTOBER, 1940.

## PRAYER TO SRI SARASVATI

नीहारहारघनसारसुधाकरामां कल्याणदां कनकचम्पकदामभुवाम्  
उत्तुङ्गपीनकुचकुम्भमनोहराङ्गीं वाष्पीं नमामि मनसा वचसा विमूढैः ॥ १ ॥

Vani, the Goddess of Learning, Whose splendour calls to mind the brilliance of condensed dew, pearl necklace, camphor, and the ambrosial moon, Who is the bestower of all that is fair and good, Who is bedecked with gold strings and *champaka* garlands, and Who is attractive in appearance with the graceful contour of Her bosom—I prostrate to Her with appropriate words and thoughts, desiring to attain divine glory (1).

या साङ्गोपाङ्गवेदेषु चतुर्वैकैव गीयते  
अद्वैता ब्रह्मणः शक्तिः सा मां पातु सरस्वती ॥ २ ॥

She is the One celebrated in all the four Vedas and the ancillary literature pertaining to them.—May She, the non-dual Power of Brahman, Sarasvati, protect me (2).

या वर्णपदवाक्यार्थस्वरूपेणैव वर्तते  
अनादिनिघनानन्ता सा मां पातु सरस्वती ॥ ३ ॥

It is Sarasvati and Sarasvati alone that evolves Herself as letters, words, sentences, and their import, yet remaining for ever the beginningless and endless infinitude.—May She take care of me (3).

अथात्ममधिदेवं च देवानां सम्यगीश्वरी  
प्रत्यगास्ते वदन्ती या सा मां पातु सरस्वती ॥ ४ ॥

May Sarasvati, the mistress of all, Who is the spirit and form of all deities, and Who dwells right at the heart of all existence as the inmost Self,

evolving the entire universe of manifestation and giving them their respective designations, keep me for ever in safety (4).

अन्तर्याम्यात्मना विश्वं त्रैलोक्यं या नियच्छति  
रुद्रादित्यादिरूपस्था यस्यामावेश्य तां पुनः  
व्यावन्ति सर्वरूपैका सा मां पातु सरस्वती ॥ ५ ॥

She controls the entire Universe having the triple form, as the immanent Divinity residing in the forms of Rudra, Aditya, and the rest; and through their medium wise ones contemplate upon Her, the One appearing as many.—May She protect me (5).

या प्रत्यग्दृष्टिभिर्जीवैर्व्यज्यमानानुभूयते  
व्यापिनी ज्ञप्तिरूपैका सा मां पातु सरस्वती ॥ ६ ॥

She is the one omnipresent Intelligence experienced by beings habitually given to perceiving only external things, as manifested outside.—May She protect me (6).

नामजात्यादिभिर्मैदैरष्टधा या विकल्पिता  
निर्विकल्पात्मना व्यक्ता सा मां पातु सरस्वती ॥ ७ ॥

She is differentiated in an eight-fold manner through name, class, and the rest; but as the essence of contentless Consciousness She is manifest in Her own essential being.—May She protect me (7).

व्यक्ताव्यक्तगिरः सर्वे वेदाद्या व्याहरन्ति याम्  
सर्वकामदुघा घेनुः सा मां पातु सरस्वती ॥ ८ ॥

The entire field of speech, expressed or suggested, for example, the Vedas and the rest, has Sarasvati for its scope; She is the Milch Cow that fulfills every wish of the devotee.—May She protect me (8).

यां विदित्वाखिलं बन्धं निर्मध्यखिलवर्त्मना  
योगी याति परं स्थानं सा मां पातु सरस्वती ॥ ९ ॥  
चतुर्मुखमुखाम्भोजवनहंसवधूर्मम  
मानसे रमतां नित्यं सर्वशुक्ला सरस्वती ॥ १० ॥

Realizing Her through all the various paths, the Yogins attain to the highest state, released from all bondage. May the all-holy Goddess of Learning—the female swan that delights in the lotus faces of *Chaturmukha*—sport in my mind (9 & 10).

नामरूपात्मकं सर्वं यस्यामावेश्य तां पुनः  
व्यावन्ति ब्रह्मरूपैका सा मां पातु सरस्वती ॥ ११ ॥

Having merged the entire universe consisting but of name and form in Her, they meditate upon Her as Brahman, the one Existence.—May She, the Deity of wisdom, protect me (11).

नमस्ते शारदे देवि काश्मीरपुरवासिनि  
 त्वामहं प्रार्थये नित्यं विद्यादानं च देहि मे ॥ १२ ॥  
 या अद्वा धारणा मेधा वाग्देवी विधिवद्ब्रह्मा  
 भक्तजिह्वाप्रसदना शमादिगुणदायिनी ॥ १३ ॥  
 नमामि याभिनीनायकेखालंकृतकुन्तलाय  
 भवानी भवसंतापनिर्वापणसुधानदीम् ॥ १४ ॥

Obeisance to Thee, O effulgent Sarada, worshipped in the city of Kashmir, I always beseech Thee to vouchsafe to me pure knowledge; Thou art faith; Thou art memory; Thou art intelligence; Thou art the divinity of speech; Thou art the spouse of Brahma; Thou gracest the devotee's speech; Thou art the bestower of holy calm and all other excellences. I bow down to Bhavani Who is decorated with the ear-ornament studded with the digit of the moon and Who is a river of nectar that counteracts the torments of worldly life (12, 13 & 14).

—A selection from *Sarasvatirahasyopanishad*.

## THE BOOK OF BOOKS OF TAMIL-LAND—I

Swami Vipulananda is one of the elder monks of the Ramakrishna Mission and is at present the editor of *The Prabhuddha Bharata*. His deep scholarship in Tamil literature and the services done to it in various ways are widely known in Tamil-land. We publish below the first of a series of articles he has kindly promised for *The Vedanta Kesari*, forming a preamble to a detailed study of the contents of the *Thirukkural*, one of the greatest books of the world.

All rights regarding this article are reserved to the writer, and as such any part or whole of it must not be reproduced or translated without his written permission, either in India or abroad. We retain the writer's punctuation and transliteration in general; but the omission of diacritical marks (which our printers could not supply) is regretted.—ED.

ANCIENT classical writers of Tamil-land, who lived in the early centuries

of the Christian era, say about the time Marcus Aurelius, the saintly Roman emperor, ruled over the Western world, have quoted from this book of books, treating it as a well-known classic of established repute, composed long before their age. The more one attempts to lift the veil of time and investigate into the past, the further the date of this book recedes. It is definite that it was written before the close of the first century of the Christian era. Further investigation may fix the date of composition earlier but not later. Perhaps the author was a contemporary of Aristotle (385-322 B.C.) and like him wrote on Ethics, Politics, Rhetoric and Aesthetics; or it may be that he was a contemporary of Chanakya (Kautilya) and like him laid down the law for kings to obey. He has much in common with these two great teachers. But the structure

of his great work is based on the literary canons formulated by the ancient Tamil rhetorician Tholkappiyana. We shall dwell on this point in a subsequent essay. The author is a Yogi, a mystic and at the same time a practical statesman. He discourses on love with soft tenderness and with even greater fervour speaks of renunciation and the life of contemplation. He exhibits no partiality for sects, but from the time he lived many sects endeavour to claim him as their own. For all these, we do not know the name of this great seer; he is known merely by his clan-name, "Valluvar". The honorific prefix "Thiru", which means "auspicious" is added to the name and the sage is known to posterity as "Thiruvalluvar". His book is written in the "Kural" metre ("dwarf" couplets). It has also the same honorific prefix added to it and is known as "Thirukkural". Thiruvalluvar's Thirukkural is the book of books of the Tamil people. It contains 133 chapters of ten couplets, each making in all 1330 couplets. Each couplet contains on an average eight words and the whole book, therefore, consists of about ten thousand words. The couplets are very terse and condensed like the Sutra literature in Sanskrit and consequently the student of Kural should spend some years over it, studying it with the help of the various commentaries on it.

Before we proceed further and interest ourselves in the contents of Kural, let us listen to the opinions said to be recorded by some of the contemporary poets regarding this book. The Pandya king Ukkirapperuvashuthi, who presided over the Madura Tamil Sangam, at that time,

has left the following record: "The four-faced Deity (Brahma, the Creator) appearing in the guise of Valluvar has condensed the true essence of the Four Vedas into this treatise divided into three sections. Let our heads bow down before it, our tongues praise it, our hearts ponder over it and our ears listen to it." Here are some of the words of high appreciation left by other poets: "Maha-Vishnu as Vamana, the dwarf, measured all the world with his two feet; likewise Valluvar with his dwarf-couplets has measured the entire realm of thought of the whole human race," (Puranar); "He who has given us this treatise on Virtue, Wealth, Love and Emancipation is a Deity; the ignorant person, who, even unwittingly calls him a mere man, is not fit for the company of the wise," (Mamulanar); "There is no poet equal to this prince of poets who has condensed into one great work the substance of several sciences and the rare teachings of the Vedas" (Nallanthuvanar); "There is no difference in meaning between the self-existent Vedas and these unerring teachings of the sage Valluvar; the only difference is that the Vedas belong exclusively to Brahmans, whereas these teachings are the common property of all castes and all creeds," (Velliveethiyar); "The excellences of Valluvar's teachings are these: they are easy to learn, difficult to comprehend; they are the essence of the Vedas; when men free from prejudice and other errors contemplate over them they reveal deeper and deeper meanings and melt their hearts," (Mankudi Maruthanar); "This treatise of three sections (Muppai) which teaches all that is worth knowing to all seekers of truth, can be compared to the Mahabharata,

the Ramayana, the Dharmasastra of Manu, the law-giver, and to the ancient Vedas. No other works can be compared to it," (Perum-thevanar, the translator of the Mahabharata). Without committing ourselves to the authenticity or otherwise of the *Thiruvalluva-Malai*, we can say that the seven stanzas quoted above sum up the evaluation of Thiruvalluvar's Kural by Pandits well-versed in the traditional scholarship.

The universality of the teachings of Thirukkural is indeed remarkable. When the student of Kural meets with some arresting thought expressing some universal aspect of human nature or human conduct in the writings of other thinkers of other ages and climes, he can easily find a parallel in this book of books. Here are a few instances: "I think the first virtue is to restrain the tongue; he approaches nearest to the gods who knows how to be silent, even though he is in the right," (Cato). *Adakkam amamarul uikkum adangkamai arirul withthu viduun* (Kural 121). "The true rule, in determining to embrace or reject anything, is not whether it has any evil in it, but whether it has more of evil than of good.... There are few things wholly evil or wholly good. Almost everything, especially of government policy, is an inseparable compound of the two, so that our best judgment of the preponderance between them is continually demanded" (Abraham Lincoln). *Kuna nadik kuttramum nadi avatrul mikai nadi mikka kolal* (Kural 504). "If you really want to judge of the character of a man look not at his great performances. Every fool may become a hero at one time or another. Watch a man do his most common actions; those are in-

deed the things which will tell you the real character of a great man" (Swami Vivekananda). *Perumaikkum enaich chirumaikkum thattham karumame kattalaikkal* (Kural 505).

In the Yoga Sutras of Bhagavan Patanjali, the second chapter that treats of the discipline and practice of Yoga is, by far, the most important. The topics treated in this chapter may be found (fully developed, in many cases) in the following chapters of the Kural: 1. Worship of God, 8. Affection, 10. Kind words, 12. Uprightness, 13. Self-control, 14. Purity of Conduct, 15. Non-desiring of another's wife, 16. Forgiveness, 17. Non-envying, 18. Non-coveting, 19. Refraining from Slander, 20. Refraining from vain words, 21. Shunning Evil, 23. Charity, 25. Mercy, 26. Refraining from meat-eating, 27. Austerities, 28. Continence, 29. Non-stealing, 30. Truthfulness, 31. Abstaining from Anger, 32. Non-injuring, 33. Non-killing, 35. Renunciation, 36. Attainment of True Wisdom; Self-realisation, 37. The Conquest of Desire, 40. Learning, 42. Listening to the instruction of the Wise, 43. Knowledge, 44. Freeing from the six Inner faults, 45. Seeking the help of Worthy Men, 46. Keeping away from bad company, 58. Considerateness, 61. Absence of Sloth, 66. Purity of action, 67. Strength of Character, 79. Friendship, 84. Ignorance, 85. Conceit, 90. Refraining from offending the Great Ones, 97. Honour, 98. Greatness, 99. Worthiness, 100. Propriety, 101. Sensitiveness to shame, 107. The dread of beggary. About one-third of Kural is, thus, found to be a treatise on Yoga-Sastra. Chapter 36 gives a *resume* of the other topics dealt with by Patanjali. Again chapters 5 to 24 treating of the house-

holder's Dharma and chapters 25 to 38 speaking of Sannyasa Dharma may together be taken as constituting a Dharma-Sastra. Chapters 39 to 108 constitute a treatise on Artha-Sastra, not merely theoretical, but practical—these would have certainly helped the Imperial Cholas to rule over their vast territories with righteousness and firmness. Chapters 109 to 115 treating of courtship and chapters 116 to 133 speaking of chaste wedded love are lyrical in sense. They vastly differ from the writings of Vatsyayana and such other authors; for, the love treated here is the pure love between husband and wife, the tender affection on which the whole fabric of social life is based. These chapters can also be interpreted (in the light shed by another great Tamil work, St. Manikka-Vachakar's Thirukkovaiyar) as treating of the mystic union between God and the human soul. As such, this section may be said to deal with Prema-bhakti, even as King Solomon's "Song of Songs" in the Bible expresses the soul's intense devotion to the Lord.

The similarities between Aristotle, Kautilya and Thiruvalluvar are so many that they need separate treatment. We are tempted to point out that chapters 64 to 73 contain the essence of Aristotle's rhetoric—based on these and other Tamil works, the present writer delivered a course of three special lectures on "Tamil Rhetoric" under the auspices of the Annamalai University. Another great Greek book, *The Golden Verses of the Pythagoreans*, bears a very close resemblance to Kural. This is a book of daily meditations, ascribed to Pythagoras who 'has been justly celebrated as a Trainer of Souls'. The Golden Verses do indeed give

all the essential principles required for the right ordering of physical, affectional, intellectual, and devotional life. When they are put into regular practice all the real and lasting virtues of the Soul follow spontaneously as natural fruits of a well-ordered life. The book is extremely condensed; the English translation in verse consists of 82 lines. Here are a few extracts from the Golden Verses and the numbers of the Kural couplets which are almost identical in sense and expression:

"Wealth comes and goes  
Of ills, the Goddess Fortune gives  
to man  
Bear meekly thou thy lot, nor  
grieve at it,  
But cure it as thou canst. Remember  
this :  
Fate gives the least of evil to the  
good.  
Many the reasonings that on men's  
ears  
Fall; good and bad. Admire not all  
of such  
Nor shun them neither."  
(Kurals 332, 339, 379, 423).

"If one speaketh false,  
Be calm. And practise ever this  
that now  
I say. Let no man's word or deed  
seduce thee  
To do or say aught not to thy best  
good.  
First think, then act; lest foolish  
be thy deed.  
Unhappy he who thoughtless acts  
and speaks."  
(Kurals 159, 167, 407).

The whole of the Golden Verses can be found in about forty-four couplets of the Kural.





administrator, and above all an ardent devotee of truth. Unlike the lives of divine incarnations and of great founders of religions, the perfection that Thiruvalluvar attained is something to which the normal man can aspire, if he chooses to lead a life of unbroken discipline, ever keeping the ideal in view. Therein lies the charm of Thiruvalluvar.

We shall conclude this essay by quoting *in extenso* from what the present writer contributed elsewhere (vide "The Origin and Growth of Tamil Literature" in *The Cultural Heritage of India, Volume III*, published by Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee—The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 19 Keshab Chandra Sen Street, Calcutta).

"Thiruvalluvar, poet, philosopher and law-giver of ancient Tamil-land, is one of those master thinkers, whose writings have a worldwide significance. The sage lived probably in the first half of the first century A.D., when Ugra Pandya the Great was ruling over Pandinadu and the Chola throne was occupied by Perunar-killi who performed the *Rajasuya* sacrifice. The contemporary king of Cheranadu was Cheraman Mavanko. The three kings of this period were living in amity and there was peace in the land. The chieftain Atiyaman-Neduman-Anji, his son Poguttelini and Nanjil-valluvan, a great patron of letters, also flourished about this time. The poetess Avvaiyar, who has addressed verses to all the kings and chieftains mentioned above, appears to be an elder contemporary of Thiruvalluvar. The great poets Kapilar, Purnanar and Nakkirar<sup>1</sup>

probably had passed away from the scene of their earthly activities at the time in which Thiruvalluvar came into prominence. The authors of the twin epics the *Silappadhikaram* and *Manimekhalai* were possibly junior contemporaries. In the realm of religious thought, the influence of Buddhism and Jainism, combining with the teachings of the Vedic religion, was producing a harmonious synthesis which in course of time was to give birth to modern Hinduism as it evolved in South India. The Agamas and the Yoga philosophy, we have reason to believe, existed in the country in this remote age. They probably were treated as "Secret doctrines". The freer social life of the heroic age was, at this time, giving place to the *varnashrama dharma* (scheme of duties according to caste and order of life) introduced from the North. A contemporary king's performing the *rajasuya* sacrifice testifies to the fact that kingship had attained a high standard of development. The period under consideration was certainly an age of intellectual ferment which demanded a revaluation of life's ideals. Tholkappiyanaar, who lived in an earlier age, codified the social and civic ideals that existed at his time. These were found insufficient to meet the changes that had taken place in the modes of life, form of government, etc. A new formulation was needed and this was supplied by the profound thinker whose work carries the seal of authority from the time in which it originated up to the present day. A careful perusal of the Kural would show that Thiruvalluvar has gathered his ideas and expression from the older Tamil poets and has marked on them the stamp of his own personality.

<sup>1</sup> *Thiruvalluvar-malai* makes these poets contemporaries of Thiruvalluvar.

The universal elements in the Kural may by a careful analysis be separated from the essentially Dravidian elements and the essentially Aryan elements contained in it.

"Many legends have gathered round the name of this great poet. One is the legend concerning his birth. We do not know how far these legends are tenable. Merely from the name Valluvan, and from the reference made by the author of *Jnanamritam*, a comparatively recent work, we may not conclude that the poet was of low origin. The Valluvars were not considered low. A contemporary chieftain eulogized by many great poets and befriended by ruling monarchs is known as "Nanjil-Valluvan" or "Valluvan, lord of the Nanjil hill". It is more plausible to consider the poet as a kinsman of the said chieftain. The chieftain as well as the poet may have arisen from the old clan of Valluvars who sounded the great drum and broadcasted the king's proclamation. The ripe wisdom in matters of statecraft exhibited in the Kural cannot be explained by any other means than by seeing the poet as a man who had not only a deep theoretical knowledge of political philosophy but also as a person well-acquainted with the practical details of administration. In the first chapter and a few other chapters of the book we are face to

face with a mystic of profound spiritual realization, a veritable *rajarishi*. The lessons given in the chapter on "The Realization of Truth" give the essentials of Yoga philosophy in a nutshell. The chapters on "Love" which form the third part of the book are in truth the most exquisite gems that adorn the Tamil Muse."

Aristotle and Chanakya, the two great teachers of ancient times, were the preceptors of two great emperors, Alexander the Great and Chandragupta Maurya. They had the capacity to mould heroes out of common clay. The same potency is present in the teachings of Thiruvalluvar. Every son and daughter of Tamil-land can achieve the maximum amount of self-realization possible to him or her by applying assiduously to the teachings of their greatest book. The book has been translated into Latin, English and other European languages by Beschi, Graul, Pope, Drew, V. S. Aiyar and others, but none has so far attempted a translation of the text along with Parimelazhagar's commentary. The text standing alone will obviously lead to errors of judgment, the chances for which will be much less if the translation of the commentary also is given. In our subsequent essays we shall say more about the contents of this great book.

SWAMI VIPULANANDA

## THE SAHAJA PATH OF KABIR

The great mediæval Acharyas like Sri Sankara and Sri Ramanuja helped the unfoldment of Brahmanism into Hinduism, and the great devotional mystics who came in the subsequent age practically demonstrated the universalism of Hinduism by emphasizing the psychological aspect more than the logical and ritualistic sides. Kabir, whose path of realization forms the theme of this brief article by Professor S. L. N. Shrivastava of the Hitakarini City College, was pre-eminently one of them and stressed with all fervour that silent aspiration after the Divine weighs much more than religious rituals and regulations.—Ed.

ALTHOUGH mystics exhibit essential similarity in their experiences and their appraisal of transcendental truths, yet we find that since the mystic's religion is what Prof. Bergson calls 'the open religion', each mystic has his own distinctive *path* which is in consonance with his own unique individuality. Mystics can therefore be classified with regard to the paths they adopt. There is a class of mystics whose path, paradoxical though it may appear, may be described as 'no-path'. They are not bound to any routine practices or accepted dogmas or established customs and conventions, but are free as the air, and through their silent and unostentatious aspiration of the heart and inward purity *alone* they attain the state of oneness with the Divine, which they maintain without effort and enjoy without interruption. Such are the Baul singers of Bengal whose cult has been made familiar to us by

Professor Kabiti Mohun Sen of Shantiniketan through his writings in the *Visvabharati Quarterly*. Here is a verse, in Prof. Sen's translation, in which a Baul gives an account of himself:

'That is why, brother, I became a madcap Baul.

No master I obey, nor injunctions, canons or custom.

Now no men-made distinctions have any hold on me,

And I revel only in the gladness of my own welling love.

In love there's no separation, but commingling always.

So I rejoice in song and dance with each and all.'

Kabir is an exemplar extraordinary of this type of a mystic. He describes his path as the *Sahaja* path. The word '*sahaja*' literally means 'easy' and as used by Kabir to describe his path implies the idea of 'effortlessness' or spontaneity. Like the 'lilies of the field' in Christ's saying, the mystics of the *sahaja* path 'toil not' with any arduous and difficult practices, but possess the divine ecstasy as a natural condition of their lives. The 'seed of the deiform nature in the human soul' shoots up, as it were, in their case, all at once, into a mighty Tree of Vision, without having to grow, stage by stage, in the fullness of time.

Kabir holds that the realization of the ultimate truth, 'the shining forth of the Light' as he calls it, is a consummation of a natural and a spontaneous aspiration and attunement, and not the result of a mechanical

observance of routine or of leaning on particular doctrines and dogmas.

'In the lonely void of (my) mind, attuned to a natural and spontaneous aspiration, there shone a Light. I bow down in adoration to that man whose aspiration is free and spontaneous (free from the vain encumbrances of routines and dogmas).'<sup>1</sup>

Pt. Vichardas Shastri in his commentary takes the second line of the couplet to mean 'I bow down in adoration to that Purusha Who is without a support (*niralamba*) or Who does not depend for His existence on anything else'. The Purusha here refers, according to him, to the Ultimate Being and His being without dependence on anything else means His being self-effulgent or *svayamjyotih*. It seems, however, more appropriate and more in coherence with the theme running through the first line of the couplet to take *purusha* in the second line to mean man in the ordinary literal sense and *niralamba* to mean one who is free from the encumbrances of routine or dogma. This state of *niralamba* is the *sahajavastha* spoken of in the first line.

In the 62nd *Shabda* of the *Bijak*, Kabir thus describes the *Sahaja-bhavana* or the *Sahaja* path:

‘आउँ न जाउँ मरौ नहि जीवौ, साहब भेट लगारी ।  
एक-नाम मैं निजुकै गहलौ, ते छूटलि संसारी ॥’

'I am not wont to move about hither and thither (i.e., for pilgrimage or anything), nor do I bother myself with practices rigorous or otherwise (lit. I do not

die<sup>2</sup> or live). (Thanks to) the Guru, (he) has effaced all my relationship with the world. With my resorting to one Name<sup>3</sup> alone of my own choosing, has the world-nescience been destroyed for me.'

He thus sings the glory of the *sahaja samadhi*:

'O Sadhus! (my) *sahaja samadhi* is very good,

Ever since the Guru has bestowed his grace upon me, deeper and deeper I am led into it.

All my movement is *parikarma*, all that I do service (of the Lord);

Whatever I say is the repetition of the Lord's Name; whatever I hear is remembrance of Him.

A house and a wilderness are the same to me; banished from my mind is all idea of duality.

I do not close my eyes nor gag my ear-holes, I put not myself to slightest trouble.

With eyes open I perceive Him everywhere, and with gladness welling up in my heart I gaze and gaze on His beauteous form. Attuned is my mind to the eternal *shabda*, gone are the baser passions.

So incessant has become my absorption (in the *shabda*) that sitting or standing, I am never free from it.'

<sup>2</sup> According to the common idiomatic usage in Hindi 'dying' here means 'extreme botheration'. Kabir is here evidently contrasting the simplicity of the *sahaja-bhavana* with the rigorous practices enjoined by other *sadhanas*.

<sup>3</sup> The one Name resorted to by him is *Ram-nam*, not Ram as a historical figure, but Ram as the Object of aspiration. In *Ram-nam*, not Ram as a historical figure, *yogino yasmin*, i.e. that in which the Yogins or aspirants take delight.

<sup>1</sup>सुख सहज मन सुमिरते, प्रगट भई सक जोत ।  
ताहि पुरुष बलिहारि मैं, निरालम्ब जो होत ॥  
रमैनी ६ (साक्षी).

Thus, Kabir's path was not the beaten track of conventional observances or routine practices, but a way of serene and silent aspiration and spontaneous raptures. Spiritual life according to Kabir is a natural rapture and not a routine of fixed and rigid practices. Kabir called his path a 'strange path', for it contrasted strangely with the routine paths usually trodden by struggling aspirants. 'Strange is this Path' said he, 'hard to describe; forgetting the worldly ties, one loseth oneself in the remembrance of God (Ram). Take care, O brethren! (to follow the right path) or else shall Death take away your souls.'

In the end, I should like to add that though the *sahaja* path is the

only natural and appropriate one for the exalted and congenitally attuned type of mystics like Kabir, yet we should not run away with the conclusion that for aspirants of ordinary spiritual calibre also regular and routine practices which involve a certain amount of strain and effort in the preliminary stages of their *sadhanas*, are not necessary. The great lesson, however, which the mystics of the *sahaja* path hold out for us is that *realization* is the true essence and purpose of spiritual life and that this purpose is apt to be defeated if the external practices are taken to be the be-all and end-all of one's spiritual effort.

S. L. N. SHRIVASTAVA

---

## PURUSHARTHA—THE LADDER OF LIFE ACCORDING TO VEDANTA

We publish below notes of a discourse given in French by **Swami Siddheswarananda** at Saint Monde, Paris, in October last, in the course of which he made a scientific analysis of the Hindu conception of the values of life. The present translation of it is by Mr. P. Seshadry Aiyar of the Travancore University.—Ed.

THE first chapter of the *Bhagavad-gita* opens with a dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna. Sri Krishna is the Incarnation (Avatar), who has descended on earth in human form; Arjuna is the disciple.

The conception of Incarnation is opposed to that of evolution. In evolution, the individual elevates himself step by step, from an elementary

existence to a divine life. Incarnation, on the other hand, is the divine Idea which descends from on high, taking a human form; it is in short involution.

We have to add that the conception of involution is purely religious. We may accept it or reject it. The *Bhagavadgita* deals with numerous spiritual systems. We find that spirituality does not necessarily entail belief in God. This is a peculiarity of the Orient.

We can lead a spiritual life even after throwing overboard all theistic ideas, after having rejected all faiths and beliefs. Only we have to give place to personal experience in the decision of questions bearing on realization. We should also pursue

internal analysis, the method of the Jnanin. The *Bhagavadgita* offers us a variety of alternative ideas to choose from; and according to our nature and preferences, we can take up that aspect which suits us best.

In the previous talk, we examined the concept of Dharma. We saw that the *Bhagavadgita* begins when Arjuna is about to engage himself in a conflict. Conflict is indeed the *sine qua non* of spiritual life. Dharma is the substratum of our life. If there is any fissure anywhere in our reason, our first task should be to find out its cause. In the absence of all conflict our religious life unfolds itself on a conventional plane. In Europe, for example, ritualistic ceremonies accompany the different events of life: birth, marriage, death. Everything is ordained according to pre-determined religious rules, and religious life itself is very often but the manner in which we conform our life to these conventions. True spiritual life, on the other hand, does not begin until conflict emerges. Only in conflict do we get that attitude which the practice of spirituality demands.

To heighten the dramatic effect, the *Bhagavadgita* constructs a framework which is at once mythological and historical. We are ushered into a camp of battle, and the scene is laid many centuries before the birth of Christ.

There was at that time in India a great Empire. The two sections of the family that ruled it, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, had begun to contest for the throne. These two were united by ties of blood; but the one, the Kauravas, represented the forces of evil and the other, the Pandavas, the forces of good. The Pandavas were few in number; the

Kauravas were one hundred. The concessions of the Pandavas only whetted the appetite of the Kauravas. The Kauravas exiled their cousins and deprived them of their possessions. When at last the Pandavas wanted to regain their household, they had no alternative but to fight. The two parties met on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. They were just about beginning the fight. These are the circumstances in which the chant of the *Gita* commences.

Before the war Sri Krishna was the protector and the friend of the two parties. To each of them he had promised his help. The one, the Kauravas, claimed all the material means and the armies which were at the disposal of Sri Krishna. The other, the Pandavas, wanted only one thing, the presence and personal aid of Sri Krishna. The two armies had ranged themselves in battle, and they were on the point of fighting. It was then that Arjuna, standing before the troops of the enemy among whom he recognized his own relations, was profoundly moved by the sight, and in anguish let down his bow and arrows. 'We have already made numerous concessions. Why should we fight at all, to affirm our supremacy? Why should we fight for the possession of a few acres of ground? I would rather renounce all my claims. I would give up my riches in favour of my cousins and lead a monk's life'—said Arjuna.

Now Sri Krishna was the charioteer of Arjuna. Hearing these lamentations, he turned back and asked his disciple why he had succumbed to despair. He said: 'This attitude does not become you. Difficulties should not daunt you. Be a man and fight.'

Hearing these words, Arjuna asked, 'Tell me why I should fight.' As an answer to this question Sri Krishna began his teaching.

It seems strange that the Lord should recommend fight to his chosen disciple. Is this not in contradiction with the pacifist ideas of India, with the Buddhistic conceptions which forbid fight and all violence? How are we to reconcile ourselves to the fact that an Incarnation exhorts us to enter without hesitation the thick of the fight?

Here is the reason. The fight is not for material supremacy. It is a fight for the assertion of our spiritual attitude. Not without struggle can we attain that attitude. What we are asked to do is not to shed the blood of others; it is to destroy the inferior self, the ego. When the conflict breaks out between the inferior and the superior parts in us, it is indispensable that we should assert at once the victory of the superior part. All concessions made to the inferior part will only end in hindering the development of our spiritual life. We can compare this with the teaching of Jesus: 'I am come not to bring peace but war.'

On the other hand, if we do not fight with our surroundings, no progress is possible. If the inferior animals had not reacted to surroundings, they would have remained in the same stage of evolution. They would never have raised themselves in the scale of beings. The fight begins in each individual for new power. The reactions produce the adaptation to circumstances, and the function creates the organ under the pressure of need. When we reach the human plane, we find that each being possesses two distinct series of

anterior memories. These are two entirely different heritages. The one is biological and the other divine. The divine heritage demands that we should seek for the destruction of the ego. The biological heritage demands that we should preserve that ego. To fight, to suppress (or rather to modify) the *elan* of the inferior life, is our real Dharma, and this fight has an eminently spiritual character.

Dharma has many aspects. One is social, another mental, and the third, spiritual. The complete spiritual life demands the synthesis of these three aspects. And this synthesis constitutes Dharma.

Spiritual life does not mean mere meditation, philanthropy, or the observance of ceremonials. It consists in so ordering all the multiple functions of our life as to direct them all towards the same goal, namely, Liberation.

We should have a synoptic conception of things, and keep in mind Liberation as the ultimate end. Liberation (Mukti) is not annihilation of the ego. Rather, it is a comprehension of Total Life. For the generality of mankind, the ego does not mean totality. Each being has got only its own particular perspective, but Liberation cannot come unless one perceives the totality. To achieve this Liberation, there are two methods. The first consists in satisfying in a legitimate manner the demands of the external life, to respond to the needs of the senses not losing our self-control, the while. This is what is called 'Pravritti Marga'. Here the tension of the ego is gradually relaxed.

The second consists in following the call of the inner life. In general the aspirations of mankind are turned

towards the external world. Sometimes the external life functions on the intellectual plane. It can equally produce in certain rare cases the desire to cut off all contact with external life—to throw overboard all the obstacles which prevent us from leading a spiritual life as we understand it. Then we begin to turn inward.

We turn a deaf ear to all the calls of the external life, and we have a tendency to consider normal life an illusion. Finally we begin to think that internal life alone is real. But not that way can we realize the truth.

Truth has a twofold aspect. The external life has as good a right as the internal life; and knowledge of spiritual life is not complete without a comprehension of external life. The movement towards the external life enables us to fulfil our duties, to redeem our obligations. According to our birth and social position, we have to live an external life. This is one aspect of our Dharma. There is also another aspect—that of an integral renunciation, the total giving up for the sake of realizing the internal life. But this is also only a particular aspect. It is not the totality.

In India it is not necessary that an aspirant should renounce completely and all at once the external life. This may give him too rude a shock. Moreover, if we appear under some external pressure, under a particular spiritual influence, to have succeeded in rooting out the least trace of desire, the ego may still subsist in hibernation. One day it may wake up again and demand satisfaction. It is not wise to strain our natural faculties.

According to Vedanta and the *Bhagavadgita*, external life is a part of our Dharma that we are not at liberty to neglect. The fulfilment of our individual duties is itself an aspect of religious life.

On this subject there is a great difference between the point of view of the Vedanta on the one hand and that of Buddhism and Christianity on the other. These two latter religions demand renunciation from the very start. Both of them require that we should have an uncompromising attitude. A Christian who wants to lead a spiritual life has to accept *in toto* the Sermon on the Mount. But this represents the very pinnacle of spiritual life. It is not all that can reach it. According to the Vedanta, this latter aspect is only a particular perspective of Life, of Reality. Vedanta admits that it is not possible to renounce our desires all at once. We cannot simply resolve desires out of existence. That is why the Vedanta declares that we should give a legitimate place to our desires so that by gradually restraining them we may acquire the power to go beyond the state of desire. The Vedanta, in fact, prescribes that we should satisfy our just desires. It acknowledges their legitimacy. For example, Arjuna is a prince and he has to govern. To the Indian mind, the King is the protector of Dharma. His primary function, indeed, is to direct the affairs of the State. But his is not a mere political role. He has also to direct the spiritual life of his people. If the king acts with cupidity, with covetousness, the people have the right to depose him. But only he can be deposed who has been disloyal to his mission and neglects to ordain the life of his



subjects on the spiritual plane. Arjuna's case is different. The party of opposition represent the forces of evil, and it is his duty to crush them.

It is at this critical moment that Arjuna is filled with fear. Another ideal which is quite foreign to his own Dharma presents itself to his mind. Arjuna sees in this the way of escape from his principal duty and he cries in anguish: 'I cannot kill my own relations; I would rather become a Sannyasin.' Arjuna, we see, seeks to conform his conduct to an ideal which does not pertain to him, and Sri Krishna replies: 'Better die following one's own Dharma rather than live following another's.' Arjuna has no right to choose to lead a monk's life when he ought to act as a King, the protector of Dharma. Here is the conflict and Sri Krishna advises him not to yield to fear.

If our intellect were allowed free play, it would furnish us with explanations to change of conduct. But then we shall be a prey to illusions, and pursuing an ideal which is not our own, we shall run the risk of deceiving ourselves. We should resolutely avoid giving way to this illusion. It is fear that creates illusion, and when fear appears in us, it paralyses that courage which should be the distinguishing mark of every man.

That is why Sri Krishna tells Arjuna in the second chant of the *Bhagavadgita*: 'Weakness of heart does not befit you; get over this weakness and be a man.'

Referring to this subject Swami Vivekananda has said, 'Sri Krishna gives here the most valuable advice. We should above all develop in us the virility of character. This is the fundamental teaching of Vedanta.'

Desire exercises itself mostly on the plane of the animal life, and instinct plays the principal role until intelligence enables us by means of discrimination to avoid the errors of the instinct.

Here we have to remark that the animal has no conception of error in our sense of the word, and that man would easily deceive himself if his instinct were not audited by intelligence. Now the instinct directs all our attention towards the ego. It tends to goad us on to the ego. Instinct is a biological heritage, a result of our animal descent. Instinct works to assure our protection. If there were no instinct, animal life would have ceased to exist long ago, because the organisms would have been deprived of all means of defence. Instinct then works for the preservation of the individual. It functions so that the ego may survive. All action from outside is in reality a menace to or an attack on the ego. Each organism is protected against external assaults that tend to destroy the ego. The ever vigilant ego rises to meet the challenge of external factors. The reflex thus created is an instinctive act having for its object the preservation of our existence and the continuance of the ego.

When intelligence wakes up, it shows no less clearly that life is not an isolated phenomenon, that it is a homogeneous and indivisible totality. There are numerous organisms which appear on the surface to be distinct units. But the human being who wakes up to the spiritual life begins to identify himself with totality. Then is true altruism born in us.

We remain for the major part of our life on the plane of the ego. We

do not know the existence of the universal life. In order that we may acquire this knowledge, in order that we may clearly discriminate between the call of the instinct and that of the superior life, it is indispensable that we should engage ourselves in a conflict. Then only do we begin to regulate the course of our life. The conflict would create a tension between the instinct and the intelligence. We shall understand that our life has been misdirected up to now. We shall then be in a position to follow the teachings of the *Bhagavadgita* and give our existence a new orientation. Then the conflict will present itself under a different garb, and to get out of it we shall choose that method which answers our inner yearnings best.

The instinct should no doubt be controlled, because the superior life commences only when the instinct is bridled. But complete renunciation is not a possibility in the beginning. If we socialize our desires we may obtain for them a legitimate satisfaction. By this method we gradually minimize our inner tension and are in a position to give our desires a social expression. Then we enter the religious life.

On the contrary, if we adopt an anti-social attitude, or cross the line that divides the just and the unjust in order to obtain our food and other necessities of living or secure excessive comforts, we commit a reprehensible act.

It can thus be seen that the satisfaction of a desire can, when it is legitimate, be considered as the fulfilment of our duty. On the other hand, if we yield to the temptations of a parasitic desire, if we dedicate ourselves to a materialistic existence,

then we take up an anti-social attitude.

The Vedanta has chalked out the method by which man can organize his life on a social plane utilizing in a legitimate manner the forces of desire. This is the external way.

At the same time, in the course of the evolution of the individual there comes a time when desire is simply not felt, when it has lost all its attractions for him, when the taste for sensuous things is dead in him. As long as intelligence sleeps, we do not ask ourselves why we follow our impulses. But when intelligence wakes up, we begin to question ourselves: 'Why do we have desires at all? Why should we permit them to exercise their force on us?' We then begin to know the anatomy of our desires. When we sound the depths of our existence, we begin to ask about the why and how of it; we enter the moral life and the intellect begins to function. We wish to know the ultimate cause of all things—that thing which is the object of our search. We find then that all the desires which had free play in us, all the instincts whose calls we heard, have but one cause. They all tend to perpetuate something in us.

Taking our stand on the body, we understand that neither the satisfaction of some desires nor the augmentation of material comforts can calm this thirst, can appease this interior *elan*. If a desire is satisfied, the trouble does not end there. It only opens up new worlds of entrapping desires that demand satisfaction in succession.

We should also remember that the satisfaction of desires does not conduce to longevity. The body is a theatre of incessant and unavoidable

changes; on the physical plane, nothing is immutable. If we consider the mental plane, here too, the desire to increase our intellectual faculties, to acquire scientific knowledge, to learn new languages, ever remains insatiable; no food can glut them.

Now let us continue our analysis of desire. We do not find a satisfactory explanation of the phenomena relating to desire except in the internal life.

If we represent desire by an arrow, we find that in the beginning the arrow is pointed outwards. In the elementary organisms, and in the course of animal evolution, the tendency is constantly towards the external life. When we reach the human being we see that the arrow turns inwards; it enters the moral life. It is then that man asks himself: Why do I want to perpetuate something in me? and he gets the answer: Because realization is the goal of life.

The *Kathopanishad* presents to us the following statement by a great sage: 'Our senses are orientated in such a manner that they tend naturally towards pleasures, towards the external life. He who desires to enter the path of spirituality should turn his vision towards the internal—*avritta chakshus*.' Introspection is the path which leads us to truth, and the illustration for it is furnished by the musk-deer which seeks to discover the source of the perfume. It runs on all sides; the perfume follows it. Then it stops, heaves, is troubled; at last it understands that the perfume is in its own body. It is thus that man understands one day that it was wrong on his part to have searched outside in the external world. He seeks to perpetuate that which is im-

mortal; he seeks outside what is within himself. When we get an intellectual comprehension of this, we see—thanks to the experience of the sages who have realized—that we also have arrived at the threshold of the spiritual life. This vision comes to us at times of crisis. It is in moments of conflict that spiritual life progresses.

By intellect we at last realize the truth. That truth is within ourselves. Owing to our biological heritage we have been led up to this time by our instincts. It is now that Sadhana (religious practice) enables us to tame little by little the instincts that have survived. Then we know that immortality is in us, and that the external world as well as the internal world are but two complementary aspects of one and the same truth, the truth which is within us.

It is then that we are enabled to throw overboard the influences of the external life. We have then the right to retire into ourselves; but we should nevertheless remember this is only one of the methods like that of the savant who, in order to examine a specimen the better, retires to his laboratory. This is the correct attitude which ought to characterize true spiritual life. It is in effect indispensable in the beginning to detach our interest so that it may not be wasted on external things. Afterwards we shall reach a point where we can understand our own dispositions and tendencies. When we feel that immortality is in us, then we have the perception of totality.

When we retire into ourselves, we ought on no account to have any sentiment of hatred towards the external world, because hatred is incompatible with spiritual life. If

even an iota of rancour persists in us, rest assured that that is not the true way.

Isolation or retreat can be salutary only if we know that immortality is in us. Later on the entire world will appear as a homogeneous expression of the divine consciousness. Here is the ultimate goal liberation leads us to. We are then freed from the snare of the ego and we understand the total life. Dharma, as we understand it in India, offers a basis sufficiently large to include all the activities of our life. Everything can thus be integrated on the plane of Dharma. Even the physical acts and training that enable man to attain spiritual life are part of Dharma. This attitude thus justifies the hygiene of the body no less than the hygiene of the mind. In this view, we remain always within Dharma.

Certain legitimate concessions are allowed to the aspirant to satisfy his desires in a moderate manner, controlled from the physical as well as the mental points of view. But true spiritual life is above the tension of the body and the mind.

In short, the training of the aspirant is a movement gradually directed to perceive the Totality which includes the internal and the external world. This conception allows us to say that, whatever be the nature of our activities, we remain always within the limits of our Dharma. No matter whether we meditate, or eat, or sleep, or suffer, whether, in short, we are engaged in this or that daily occupation, it is, in effect, Dharma, according to the teachings of the Vedanta which embrace every part of our life. Our entire life then becomes truly religious. Religion does not consist in remaining every-

day immobile for a few minutes in the posture of meditation. All our acts, all our thoughts, should be penetrated, impregnated, bathed, in the Divine. It is thus that we arrive at the state of liberation—*Jivan-mukti*.

In the fulfilment of Dharma, India gives a proper place to Artha and Kama also. Kama is desire. Artha is the legitimate means of satisfying the desire.

When the internal tension is relaxed by the fulfilment of our duty, thus understood, we naturally attain the spiritual life. When conflict presents itself, man asks to himself: What should I do? When he reckons the difficulties that confront him in the fulfilment of his Dharma he is seized by fear and fright. He seeks to fly from the solution of the problem with which he is faced. To such a man this is the message:—You have a duty to fulfil. Fear troubles and paralyses you. You have the feeling that you are going to lose something. Be, on the contrary, assured that you lose nothing in fulfilling the duty which is demanded of you. The goal of our life is really the quest of immortality. We ought never to lose sight of the fact that all our acts, all our aspirations constitute a search—that the *elan* of our life tends towards the realization of the reality. Even the acts that satisfy our desires can be directed towards the ideal. But when a man loses sight of the ideal, then verily he is a boat without a rudder.

To reach the spiritual end, it is essential that we should arm ourselves with patience. The change of attitude can never be attained by a few week's efforts.

Thus we see that the *Gita* propounds a very high philosophy. To the question: What place has such a teaching at the field of battle? I repeat the answer that it is a device by which the artist has tried to excite interest and throw into relief the fundamental teaching. The teaching is given by Sri Krishna himself and the *Bhagavadgita* can be considered as a complete science of the soul—the Atman. In this science, Sri Krishna has included all the aspects of mental and spiritual life.

It is essentially a message of Hope; we are assured that each of us can, keeping to his own place, remaining in his own particular situation, spiritualize his or her life. The concept of Dharma, that is to say, the fulfilment of individual duty, permits each being to crown the heights of the most exalted life. The goal of existence is, in short, to find everywhere the one and the only reality, the Universal Reality.

SIDDHESWARANANDA

## THE SADHANA OF THE BHAGAVADGITA—II

(Continued from the last issue)

**Dr. S. K. Maitra, M.A., Ph.D.,** Head of the Department of Philosophy, Benares Hindu University, is the author of the *Neo-romantic Movement in Contemporary Philosophy* and other works. In the following paper he gives a compendious analysis of the *Bhagavadgita* viewed as a practical scripture illuminating the paths of spiritual realization. A translation of this paper into Hindi has appeared in the 'Sadhana' number of the *Kalyan*.—Ed.

### THIRD DIVISION OF THE YOGAS: YOGAS RELATING TO THE UNITY OF THE TWO PREVIOUS REALIZATIONS: COMPLETE SELF-REALIZATION OR GOD-REALIZATION

We now come to the last division of the *Gita* which deals with the highest kind of realization—the unity of the two previous realizations resulting in complete self-realization or God-realization. We have just seen the necessity of God assuming the human form in order to establish a link between God and man. But this is not enough. It is further

necessary that man after realizing the Cosmic Form of God should descend to the world and view his duties in the worldly plane in the light of this realization. In other words, what is needed is that man should maintain his continuity with the Infinite Self and realize the latter as his true self. How he is to do this is the theme of the last six chapters.

It is clear that there will be a good dose of knowledge in the last six chapters. This is, perhaps, the reason why it is generally believed that these chapters deal with knowledge. But it should be remembered that the knowledge spoken of here is different from the knowledge as depicted in the seventh chapter. There the knowledge that is described is a purely theoretical one, namely, that 'Vasudeva is all'. Here the knowledge that is communicated has an eye to two things. First it shows how the self stands in relation to the world, and secondly, how it stands in relation to God.

This double stand-point we notice clearly in Chapter XIII. If we examine the characteristics of knowledge as given in verses 8 to 12, we find such characteristics as humility, unpretentiousness, harmlessness, forgiveness, rectitude, service of the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control, etc. These qualities we usually look upon as moral qualities rather than as qualities of knowledge, and from this it is evident that the *Gita* here views knowledge not merely from the theoretical point of view, but also from the practical point of view, from the point of view, that is, of the relation of the self to the world. From this point of view it is very significant that the title of the chapter is *Ksetraksetrajñayoga*. The relation between the self and the world is that of the field (*Ksetra*) and the knower of the field (*Ksetrajña*). What, however, is the field? From the description of the field as given in verses 5 and 6, it appears that it comprises not merely what is physical, but the whole of our sensuous, intellectual, and emotional nature. In fact, the field is the totality of the physical, vital, and mental regions. The self is the knower of this field. It is not itself one of the objects which constitute the field. The *Gita* stresses here, as Kant did later, the fact that the self is a subject and not a substance. This conception of self brings out the unity of the individual self with that of the Cosmic Self, for the latter differs from the former only in being 'the knower of all the fields'. So, as Sri Krishna Prem has pointed out, the teaching of this chapter may be summed up by the words: 'Within you is the light of the world'.

The barrier thus breaks down completely between the self and God. The nature of self defines the nature of God. The chapter therefore most naturally passes from the nature of self to the nature of God. Those remarkably beautiful verses (xiii: 28-34) which depict the nature of the self depict also the nature of God.

But although the nature of the self is sufficiently well described in the thirteenth chapter, yet something more is necessary than the *ksetra-ksetrajña* relationship to indicate the attitude of the self towards the world. This is the necessity for the teaching imparted in the fourteenth chapter, which is characteristically named *Gunatrayavibhagayoga*. There are three qualities, the *Gita* says, namely, *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* which originate from Prakriti<sup>5</sup> and which bind fast the soul which dwells in the body (xiv: 5). Of these, *sattva*, on account of its purity, is illuminating and healthy (or untroubling, as Sridhara interprets the word *anama-yam*), and causes bondage through attachment to pleasure and knowledge. The quality of *rajas* arises from desire and attachment and causes bondage by attachment to action. *Tamas*, born of ignorance, is the deluder of all dwellers in the body and binds through heedlessness, indolence, and sloth (xiv: 6-8). The *Gita* further says (xviii: 40) that there is

<sup>5</sup> As I have shown elsewhere, the *Gita's* view of the *gunas* differs in essential respects from that of the orthodox Samkhya. For one thing, the latter does not regard the *gunas* as originating from Prakriti, but as constituting Prakriti, Prakriti itself being nothing else than the *gunas* in a state of equilibrium. Secondly, the orthodox Samkhya looks upon the *gunas* as constituent elements of Prakriti and not as attributes or qualities.

no entity, either on earth, or in heaven among the Devas, which is free from these three *gunas*. It is these three *gunas* which cause bondage. Unless, therefore, a man can rise above the three *gunas*, he cannot escape from the bondage of the world. The instruction, therefore, which the fourteenth chapter imparts is: Be above the three *gunas*. This seems to be the same as the advice given in ii: 45 ('*nistraigunyo bhava arjuna*'); but there is this difference, that in the earlier chapter there is no discussion about the *gunas*. This difference, in fact, is what we notice throughout when we compare the instruction given in the last six chapters with that given earlier. Although at first sight it may seem that the instruction in the later chapters is in many respects the same as that given in the earlier chapters, yet it is always richer and more concrete, as it proceeds from an analysis of the nature of the self as well as of the universe.

The discussion of the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters relating to the nature of the self and its relation to the world is a fitting prelude to the topic discussed in the fifteenth chapter, the conception of Purushottama. The conception of Purushottama is the *Gita*'s highest conception of God. There are various misconceptions relating to the *Gita*'s view of Purushottama, against which it is necessary to be on our guard. Thus, the late Lokamanya Tilak regarded Purushottama as the same as Akshara Brahman. The reviewer in the *Modern Review* (the late Mr. M. C. Ghosh), while reviewing Sri Aurobindo's *Essays on the Gita*, took Sri Aurobindo to task because he took the teaching of the fifteenth

chapter seriously, since in the opinion of the reviewer the fifteenth chapter must be considered spurious, as there could not be any Purushottama higher than Akshara Brahman. Such a criticism will remind one of similar views expressed by Greek scholars of the last century who regarded the 'Parmenides' and the 'Laws' of Plato as spurious.

There can be absolutely no doubt that the conception of Purushottama is different from that of Akshara Brahman. The *Gita* itself states in unmistakable terms in xv. 18 the difference between the two. The conception of Purushottama crowns the whole teaching of the *Gita*, without which it will not be complete.

The fifteenth chapter begins with a magnificent simile. The universe is compared to a giant Asvattha tree which has its roots upwards and its branches downwards. The root which is located above is God, and the branches which move downwards are rooted to the ground by means of the knots of Karma. The whole illustration is no doubt taken from the *Kathopanishad* (ii: 6.1), but the *Gita* has added certain features of its own. For in the *Kathopanishad* nothing is said about the branches reaching the ground and causing bondage through Karma. Nor is anything stated there about the necessity of cutting the lower branches with the sword of non-attachment.

This simile illustrates very well the *Gita*'s conception of God. God is the transcendent source of the world. But the world is not unreal; on the contrary, it is the real manifestation of God. Bondage is due to attachment to the world. If this attachment can be destroyed by doing

work in a spirit of absolute detachment, the nature of the Divine Personality will be revealed to us.

God in the *Gita* is not an abstract God. In the twelfth chapter the *Gita* has unmistakably shown its preference for the concrete conception of God. The worship of the Akshara and the Avyakta is pronounced to be very difficult and not worth pursuing, when there is the easier method of worship of the Personal (or rather Superpersonal) God.

It is true that the *Gita* has mixed up always the deistic, pantheistic, and theistic conceptions of God. In the brilliant verses depicting the nature of God in the ninth chapter (verses 17-19), as also in those remarkably fine verses in the thirteenth chapter (13-18 and 23) on the same subject, we have a curious blending of the transcendent and immanent conceptions of God. But as Dr. S. N. Dasgupta has clearly pointed out, in spite of these conflicting views about the nature of the Supreme Being, there is one central idea towards which the whole of the *Gita* teaching moves. It is the idea of a Superpersonal God. To quote the words of Dr. Dasgupta: 'the answer apparently implied in the *Gita* to all objections to the apparently different views of the nature of God is that Transcendentalism, Immanentism, and Pantheism lose their distinctive and opposite characters in the melting whole of the superpersonality of God' (*History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 527).

This conception of a superpersonal God appears in the *Gita* in two forms: Firstly, it appears in the form of the idea of Avatara which is sketched in iv: 7 and 8. This idea,

as Dr. Dasgupta has pointed out, is a new idea introduced by the *Gita* which did not exist in the Upanishads, an idea which played a very important part in the religious life of our country. The significance of the conception of Avatara has been beautifully shown by Sri Aurobindo in his *Essays on the Gita*, First Series. The essence of this conception is thus indicated by him: 'The Avatara comes as the manifestation of the divine nature in the human nature, the apocalypse of its Christhood, Krishnahood, Buddhahood, in order that the human nature may by moulding its principle, thought, feeling, action, being on the lines of that Christhood, Krishnahood, Buddhahood transfigure itself into the divine' (p. 217). 'It is the manifestation from above of that which we have to develop from below; it is the attracting divine example given by God to man in the very type and form and perfected model of our human existence.' (*ibid*, p. 230).

This is one way in which God descends into the world. The other way is the more diffuse way in which He descends into the whole of Nature and the world of conscious and unconscious beings. The fifteenth chapter deals with this second type of descent.

God as Purushottama has shed here His awful aloofness and become the indwelling principle of the whole world of matter, life, and consciousness. He is the active principle in the world, upholding everything. He is seated in the heart of everything ('*sarvasya cha 'ham hridi sannivishta*'). From Him emerge memory and wisdom and also their absence.



He is the subject-matter of all the Vedas ('*Vedais cha sarvair aham eva vedyah*'), the author of the Vedanta and the knower of the Veda. He is described as taking possession of the bodies of breathing things in the form of the Fire of Life ('*aham vaisvanaro bhutva praninam deham asritah*'). Only a part of Him has descended into the world of living beings ('*mamaiva 'mso jivaloke jiva-bhutam sanatanah*'). Further—and this is a point which I like to stress—we notice here what I have already pointed out, namely, that the *Gita* does not separate the transcendent and immanent aspects of God distinctly, but that on the whole, God's immanent aspect is more clearly shown here than His other aspect. From the point of view of the *Gita*, transcendence and immanence cannot really be separated. God's transcendence must be maintained; otherwise it is not worth while realizing God. On the other hand, it must be possible for us to realize Him, and for that, He must shed His aloofness to some extent to make Himself accessible to us. Indeed, it is in the manner in which the transcendent and immanent characteristics of God are combined that the beauty of the *Gita's* conception of Purushottama chiefly lies. There is one important consequence for human beings of this conception of Purushottama. It is, as Sri Aurobindo points out (vide *Essays on the Gita*, 2nd Series, p. 276), that the highest state of the soul is a dwelling in the Purushottama and not a complete dissolution (*laya*).

The realization of the Purushottama is the highest realization in the *Gita*, and is therefore rightly called *guhyaatamam sastram*. But to com-

plete it, it is necessary that there should be a knowledge of certain features of the world in which we live. The first thing which the seeker after perfect realization is to know is that there is a twofold division in the whole world of living beings ('*dvau bhuta sargau*')—the Divine (*Daiva*) and the Demoniachal (*Asura*). Human beings are no exception to this universal principle of division, and they can also be divided into the *Daiva* and the *Asura*. It is at first not quite clear why the threefold division of the fourteenth chapter according to the *gunas* is not adopted in this chapter, but instead of that we get a bipartite division into the *Daiva* and the *Asura*. The division in accordance with the *gunas* is undoubtedly more scientific and is adopted again in the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters. Its temporary eclipse by a bipartite division is due to the special purpose of this chapter which is to show that from the point of view of their influence for good or for evil, human beings can be divided into two classes. The *Tamasika* man is either ruled out or, as Sri Aurobindo conjectures, is probably included in the *Asura* class. Whatever that might be, the presence of these two types of men with their respective qualities is of special importance for the man who is in the final stage of realization. He should know that any the least trace in him of the qualities of the lower type of men should be carefully removed.

The seventeenth chapter brings into prominence the importance of *sraddha* or faith. The *Gita* declares that a man is as his faith is ('*yo yachhrahah sa eva sah*'). Objective conditions of realization are of course important, but the most important con-

dition is the subjective one of faith. Without this all action is false;

अभद्रया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतं च यत् ।

असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्फलं नो इह ॥

XVII: 28

The *Gita* has also in previous chapters emphasized the importance of *śraddha*; for example, in vi: 47 it has said that 'among all Yogins, he who, full of faith, with the inner Self abiding in Me, adoreth Me, he is considered by Me to be the most completely harmonized'. But in the seventeenth chapter faith is made the essential subjective condition of all virtuous action. The importance of this teaching for the man about to reach the highest stage of realization cannot be exaggerated, for he must make a thorough self-examination in order to find out whether all his actions are prompted by the highest kind of *śraddha*.

The eighteenth chapter sums up the whole teaching of the *Gita*. As I have already pointed out, the *yogas* mentioned in the previous chapters first find their complete fulfilment in the eighteenth chapter. Neither the *Samkhyayoga* mentioned in the second chapter, nor the *Karmayoga* described in the third chapter, nor any other *Yoga* described in the previous chapters finds its completion in the instruction imparted in that chapter, but waits for its consummation in the final instruction imparted in the eighteenth chapter. The eighteenth chapter, therefore, gives the final touch to the teaching of all the previous chapters and completes that process of self-realization, and consequently also God-realization, which it is the object of the *Gita* to expound.

It starts with the fundamental opposition of the earlier chapters, namely, that between *sannyasa* and *karmayoga*, which stands in the way of self-realization. This opposition it gets rid of much in the same way in which it is done in the earlier chapters, but with a difference which is due to the teaching of the later chapters concerning the modifications of all mental qualities due to the action of the *gunas*. It makes a distinction between *sannyasa* and *tyaga*, the latter conveying, as Sri Krishna Prem points out, in addition to the idea of relinquishment, that of a positive donation. The analysis of the three kinds of *tyaga*, according to the prevalence of the three *gunas*, has the merit of showing in what the essence of the pure form of *tyaga* consists. This essence, according to the finding of the *Gita*, is the doing of an action purely from a sense of duty 'with complete freedom from attachment and relinquishment of fruits' (xviii: 9).

The *Gita* next gives an analysis of action. Five causes are mentioned of every action, whether good or bad. These five causes are: (1) *adhithana* (body) (2) *karta* (agent) (3) *karanam* *prithagvidham* (the various sense-organs) (4) *vividhas cha prithak chestah* (the various life-functions and bio-motor activities) and (5) *daiva*. This last cause has been explained by Dr. S. N. Dasgupta as 'the unknown objective causal elements or the all-controlling power of God' (*History of Indian Philosophy*, p. 515). It would, however, be more in consonance with the general standpoint of the *Gita*, which looks upon God as the ultimate controller of all beings (Cf. xviii: 61), to take the word in the second

of the two senses mentioned by Dr. Dasgupta. In any case, the agent is only one of the causes and cannot arrogate to himself the position of being the sole determinant of action. In fact, the *Gita* calls him a man of perverted nature who thinks that he is the sole author of his actions (xviii: 16). Until this false notion is completely removed and a man feels that the ultimate author of everything is God, there is no possibility of attaining complete self-realization. This instruction is very necessary for Arjuna, for his chief failing is egoism, as the Lord Himself points out with rather brutal frankness (xviii: 58-60).

This raises the question of human freedom. I have discussed the question elsewhere<sup>6</sup>, and I cannot do more than just touch upon it here. Although Lord Krishna in xi: 33 and 34 points out that all the foes (Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, etc.) have been slain by Him and asks Arjuna to be only the instrumental cause of their death, yet it is not true to say that the *Gita* does not believe in human freedom. It only does not regard man as the sole or even as the ultimate author of his actions. The agent is mentioned as one of the causes of his action in xviii: 14, and indeed, the whole purpose of the *Gita* will be frustrated if man is treated merely as an automaton. If the *Gita* had treated Arjuna as a mere automaton it would not have wasted eighteen chapters in teaching him the way to self-realization. The words of the *Gita*: ('uddhared atmana atmanam') (vi: 5) clearly

prove, if any proof indeed was needed, that the *Gita* does not advocate absolute determinism. I need not discuss the question further, as I have already discussed it fully elsewhere.

We come now to the doctrine of Svadharma and Svabhava which is just touched upon in ii: 31 and iii: 35 and more fully dealt with in the last chapter. A good deal of misconception prevails regarding the meaning of this doctrine. Many people have jumped to the conclusion that here is the support of the *Gita* for the caste system. But before jumping to this conclusion we should consider one simple thing, namely, that there is no mention in the *Gita* of the hereditary principle which is the basis of the caste system. There is no doubt here a justification of a fourfold social order based upon differences of quality and Karma of men, but this is very different from the caste system the root idea of which is heredity. It will indeed be quite correct to say that the *Gita* does not favour a caste system based upon heredity.

What it does favour is a social system in which everyone can pursue that work which is in accordance with his nature. The *Gita* no doubt believes that men can be divided into four broad classes; and it has given the names, Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra, to these four classes. But if the characteristics of the higher classes are examined, it will be found that they are inner characteristics, qualities that have reference to the inner nature of the man, rather than external characteristics indicative of status and family. Sri Aurobindo has drawn our attention particularly to this point and has also shown the significance of the difference which we notice between

<sup>6</sup> Vide my article 'The Conception of human freedom in the Bhagavadgita' *Prabuddha Bharata*, September, 1939.

the characteristics of the higher classes and those of the lower classes. The reason for this difference is, as he states, that 'the temperament moved to production and wealth-getting or limited in the circle of labour and service, the mercantile and the servile mind, are usually turned outward, more occupied with the external values of their work than its power for character, and this disposition is not so favourable to a Sattvic or spiritual action of this nature' (*Essays on the Gita*, 2nd Series, p. 381).

The principle of Svadharma means that a man's duty is to act in conformity with his true nature. What, however, is the true nature of a man? The *Gita* believes that every man's nature must belong to one or other of the four types already mentioned. How, however, is a man to know to which of these four types he belongs? The advice of the *Gita* here is very practical. On the whole, it is much safer to accept the verdict of society and regard oneself as belonging to the class to which one is assigned by society than arbitrarily to select one's class oneself. Even if we do not take into account the superhuman knowledge which enables Lord Krishna to estimate accurately the status of Arjuna, even if we say that the Lord calls Arjuna a Kshatriya because he is called so by society, we have to reflect that this social order is not an arbitrary order but is itself the expression of the Divine Will. If the status given to an individual by society deviates very considerably from the status to which he is entitled by his Svabhava, if, consequently, there is coercion and oppression of individuals, then that becomes a fit occasion for the Lord to come down as Avatara and bring the perverted

social order back to its normal and healthy condition. In this way Svadharma and the Dharma of society are brought into harmony with each other.

It must not also be forgotten that the social self is really our Greater Self, a fuller expression of our individual self. The *Gita* does not believe in any realization of the individual except through society. This is the social aspect of the doctrine of Svabhava and Svadharma, and that is why the *Gita* connects this doctrine with the institution of the fourfold order which is, indeed, the conception of society in the *Gita*. We may challenge the particular fourfold order mentioned in the *Gita*, we may say that it is artificial, but some social order is needed if the individual is to realize his self. And after all, the fourfold order, as sketched in the *Gita*, is not as artificial and unnatural as it appears at first sight to be. For, as Sri Aurobindo has pointed out (*Vide Essays on the Gita*, 2nd Series, p. 392), 'there is always in human nature something of all these four personalities developed or undeveloped, wide or narrow, suppressed or rising to the surface, but in most men one or the other tends to predominate and seems to take up sometimes the whole space of action in the nature. And in any society we should have all four types, —even, for example, if we could create a purely productive and commercial society such as modern times have attempted, or for that matter, a Sudra society of labour, of the proletariat such as attracts the most modern mind and is now being attempted in one part of Europe and advocated in others. There would still be the thinkers moved to find the

law and truth and guiding rule of the whole matter, the captains and leaders of industry who would make all this productive activity an excuse for the satisfaction of their need of adventure and battle and leadership and dominance, the many typical purely productive and wealth-getting men, the average workers satisfied with a modicum of labour and the reward of their labour.'

The *Gita* next proceeds to show how by doing one's Svadharma one can attain unity with God. It begins by saying that a man must worship God through the Karma that is proper to him ('*svakarmana tam abhyarchya siddhim vindati manavah*' xviii: 46). Then it makes that famous assertion (xviii: 47): 'Better is one's duty, though destitute of merit, than the well-executed duty of another'. Proceeding in the same strain, it asserts that one must not abandon the duty which is in conformity with one's nature even though it is defective, for all undertakings have defects, just as no fire is without smoke (xviii: 48). The next six verses (49-54) describe the manner in which the individual can obtain complete union with God by doing his own Svadharma. The words which the *Gita* uses in this connection are: *brahmabhuyaya kalpate* ('he is fit to become Brahman'). These words are also used in xiv: 26 in connection with the description of the condition of the *trigunatita*. Another word which the *Gita* uses to indicate the condition of being one with God is *brahmabhuta*. This word is also used in v: 24 in the same sense. In ii: 72, v: 24 and v: 25 the word used to indicate the nature of the self when it becomes one with Brahman is *brahmanirvana*. All these words

evidently mean the same thing and are intended to express the fact that the self which has had the complete realization is indeed nothing else than God. This is quite in conformity with the spirit of the Upanishads which say: 'The knower of Brahman is nothing else than Brahman.—*Brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati*, Mund. Up. III: 2.9'.

Such is the way in which the *Gita* sums up its teaching. It is a book, as I have said at the beginning, which deals with Sadhana or way to realization. It ends, therefore, with a triumphant message of hope from God:

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।

अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

XVIII: 66

and an equally triumphant declaration of loyalty and devotion from Arjuna:

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाऽच्युत ।

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥

XVIII: 73

The concluding verse of the *Gita*

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।

तत्र श्रीर्बिजयो मूर्तिर्भुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥

puts its whole teaching in a nutshell. It is the combination of Yogesvara with a loyal and devoted Dhanurdhara, like Arjuna, which is necessary for the well-being of the world. If Arjuna were merely a devoted disciple, that would not have sufficed. It was necessary that he should be a Dhanurdhara, a worker, and not a man merely given to contemplation. The uplift of the universe, therefore, rests upon two conditions which must be fulfilled by human beings:

(1) They must be prepared to open out their minds to the light from above in an attitude of complete faith and devotion, and (2) they must be prepared to act in accordance with the light which they receive from above in a spirit of absolute self-effacement and detachment. If they

fulfil these conditions, then only can they receive illumination from the Lord of Yoga which will enable them to lift the universe from its present hopelessly degraded condition to one of eternal peace and blessedness.

S. K. MAITRA

## LESSONS FROM DREAM

Some important and interesting conclusions are drawn by **Swami Nissreyasananda** from a study of the phenomenon of dream in the following paragraphs.—Ed.

THE rainbow is a familiar phenomenon. We see it with the naked eye. We can even take a photo of it with a camera. To this extent it is real. But if we ride in an aeroplane into the very cloud which formed the basis of our perception of it, we shall certainly miss it *there*. And if there are no suitable clouds in other parts of the sky, we shall not see any rainbow at all. From the cloud, then, it is unreal. It is not true to say that we see *nothing* there; for we have *light* there, unbroken into colours. From this we learn that the question of reality or unreality cannot be decided without eliciting the answer to a counter-question, 'From where are you observing?' That the rainbow is real and unreal, are both equally *possible* perceptions. The contradiction vanishes when we realize that the standpoints are different.<sup>1</sup>

In a study of Reality we should not unduly stress the contradictions which different standpoints of perception present on a surface view. Such stress will lead us only to the conclusion that all relative views, being apparently contradicted by other views, are wrong and absolutely unreal. Our study will then be a specialization in Unreality! It will be accompanied by the unpleasant experience of being forced to live somehow in a world of zeros. Unwary teachers, and therefore students, of Vedanta are likely to get stuck up in such a plight.

We must, on the other hand, as our enquiry proceeds, always see from

example, the commentary on Yoga Sutra IV: 33, where the question is asked whether there is an end to the succession of the cycle of births and deaths. In reply it is pointed out that the question cannot be answered as it stands. There are no doubt some questions that can be answered straight off, e.g., 'Will all that is born die?' And the answer is decisive 'Yes'. But the question whether all that dies will be reborn requires a clear analysis. The wise man whose longings have disappeared through right discernment will not be reborn, but others will surely get rebirth. An unqualified 'yes' or 'no' would both be wrong, the truth being that to the wise man the cycle ends, but not to others.

<sup>1</sup> Our ancients knew how to apply this relative principle, although all may not have applied it in an equally thorough manner everywhere. Compare, for

which particular standpoint each perception is called 'valid' and 'real'. For as often as we shift the place, manner, and time of observation, we get different views of Reality; and the epithet 'unreal' can be applied to any view *only relatively*. In making a harmonious co-ordination of different views, no single perception is to be rejected as constituting an inconvenient exception. All available materials are to be arranged according to their relative worth. In following this method we shall never miss Reality in *any context*. Being all-inclusive and most comprehensive, this method will take us step by step to a unique standpoint looking out on the shores of Ultimate Reality or Truth.

#### BEHIND THE DREAM

Keeping these points well in mind, let us make a study of some valuable features of dream experience.

Psychologists have studied the contents of dreams with a view to finding out the relationship between the 'incidents' presented in any person's dreams and the likes, dislikes, hopes, and disappointments of that person's waking experience. This has led them to establish the *causal* relation between the *contents* of waking and dream states. In other words, they have shown that there is nothing haphazard in dream, and that the principles of conflict, dissociation, wish-fulfilment, symbolical thinking, and so on, *intelligently* combine to 'prepare' the dream-scene, just as the stage manager does behind the curtains and within the green-room.

We shall pursue our enquiry without contradicting the idea of an 'intel-

ligent' plan behind the dream. What interests us is to know what makes dreams unique. The answer is got from our own direct experience. We invariably fail to detect, at the time, that *any* change has taken place, although, in fact, the dream-scene has replaced the waking-scene with a rapidity and strangeness which ought normally to have aroused our wonder, suspicion, or protest. Every time we dream, this 'trick' is played; and the wisest man is not able to avoid its grip.

In the waking state we believe in our steadfast clinging to our physical body with its definite characteristics of height, colour, and the like. We may be dissatisfied with its present powers or environments, but we do not wish to let it slip out of our control or disappear in death. We feel we have got 'a' mind too, with its own cultural level, its notions of what is right, proper, or possible, its hobbies, its weak and strong points, in short, its 'individuality'. We wish to avoid death, since it means loss of this 'individuality'. Taking this physical and mental aspects of 'individuality' as the standard, we call the dream an 'unreal' experience, whose 'contents' we can ordinarily afford to ignore or forget. We do not mean to say that such a view is wholly *wrong*. It may be compared to the view of the rainbow from the earth. But in the interest of truth, we ought to see if there are no other views possible. And if there are, which among them is the most comprehensive? In making such an enquiry we shall have to ask strange questions.

For the sake of convenience, let us take for our study a typical dream as follows: An ascetic lies on his hard

stone bed in his little cave at night, and dreams that he is a king, living with his queen, in a well-lighted palace, guarded by soldiers.

According to the ascetic's estimate from the waking standpoint, his asceticism has not been affected, for he has only 'dreamt', and dream belongs to the world of the 'unreal'.

But did the *ascetic* dream? Did he do it in the sense in which he ate, walked, or talked, *i.e.*, exercising voluntary control? Was it not rather that some 'Force', *superior* to all that the ascetic stood for as an 'individual', and without any consideration for 'his' tastes and convenience, *threw* 'him' aside, as it were, into a *helpless condition*, and showed 'him' the dream? No human being, to our knowledge, has a voluntary control over his dreams. He cannot predict what dream he is going to get any night. Nor can he will that a particular dream should appear to him, true in all respects to what he might choose for himself during his waking hours. He is also unable normally to protest against or shake off the dream unless the dream incidents go to an unusually exciting, terrible, or shocking extent. These peculiarities of dream are within the experience of *every one*.

Science—which is only another name for organized knowledge—begins by studying the properties of 'matter'. Studying 'Mind' in a scientific manner, then, we single out first this peculiar property of it, *viz.*, that it can 'produce' thoughts, as it were, at one level, and make them

appear, at another level, as a tangible world of real men, solid objects, and so on, the 'dreamer' himself being *one* of the individuals in the scene. We get daily experience of being tricked in this way. Yet we go through life as the permanent *victims* of this inherent power of Mind. It is ridiculous to accept a daily defeat from a certain 'power' and at the same time call its work of overthrowing our personality a mere 'unreality'.

This brings us to the question: Are we right in making the body of the waking state the *starting point* of dreams, or even of any thought? The king felt that he had a mind and a body, and that he was moving in a world of individuals. The ascetic too feels similarly. The king felt that he lived in a world of space, time and possibilities. The ascetic, in his turn, thinks that he is in another world of space, time, and certain other possibilities. It is established that Mind alone 'produced' all these elements of the dream 'out of itself' and spread them out 'in itself'. The king was not in reality a starting point of 'his' thoughts. Instead 'he' was an object of thought to Mind. The king and his world correspond to the view of the rainbow from the earth. The view from Mind's level, that everything was Mind alone, unbroken into personalities and so on, corresponds to the view from the cloud, that there is light alone present, unbroken into colours. What extra reason can waking scenes show to prevent them from being brought under the same category as dreams, with regard to their 'production'? In other words, from Mind's level, are not the individuals and the world of space, time and possibilities

<sup>3</sup> In this article the terms 'produced', 'creates', 'level', 'will', and 'activity' have been used with regard to Mind. As our analysis proceeds, the present meanings will stand altered to some extent.



of waking condition also 'produced' by Mind, and spread out 'in itself'? Let us remember that the king's mind did not produce itself or any other thing. On the same analogy, we do not also claim that the ascetic's mind produced itself or any other thing. Mind produced the king and queen; so too has Mind produced the ascetic and his cave. It will be found on impartial analysis that waking condition has not any single reason to advance to avoid its being classed along with dream *regarding the points under discussion*. (Possible arguments in favour of waking state being kept separate, and their refutation will be dealt with in another article.)

Judging from Mind's level, then, how do waking and dream states appear? In order to answer this, we have to 'detach' ourselves from the waking personality and view it as 'a thought', just as we now in waking condition, do with regard to the once living personality of the king of our illustration. This involves a complete change of outlook, a permanent 'shifting of our headquarters' from our present clinging to the waking body as the starting point of all thinking. Mind is the seat of thinking. It thinks in terms of space, time, and personalities moving in a world of possibilities. If the king and queen are 'thought' or 'willed' out into existence in the first scene, the ascetic and his world come as a second scene. Mind is equally 'active' or 'diligent' in both scenes. It cannot make a distinction of one being real and the other being unreal. Both are equally 'real' to it. In that case, then, the distinction of dreaming and waking vanishes for it. It is just like the distinction of day

and night vanishing in the solar orb.

If waking and dream are controlled scenes 'willed' out by Mind, what is the experience of deep sleep? We have only to apply the law of inertia to realize that deep sleep cannot be a 'passive' state, as the ascetic might view it. Force is needed to move an object at rest, or to bring a moving body to rest. If then Mind has been 'willing' in some manner to 'produce' the two other scenes, it must be 'willing' in an opposite manner to account for the third state. When it willed, 'Let there be a king and a queen', what the ascetic calls the dream started. When it willed, 'Let there be an ascetic and his cave', the ascetic's waking state proper got its start. And when it willed, 'Let none of these appear', what the ascetic considers the 'inactive' state of deep sleep set in. Deep sleep, then, from Mind's level, is not passive or inactive. It stands in the same category as the two other states. Mind is thus 'outside' the scope of waking, dream or deep sleep. These three states are in a way its 'controlled products'. Waking and dream states are 'objects of its thought'; and the 'control' which individuals presented in these scenes *seem* to possess is not a *fact* but only an *appearance*. Real 'control' is Mind's; and it is present even in the deep sleep of the ascetic.

Mind is thus that Impersonal Entity which 'creates' personalities and scenes through its inherent power of 'thought' and 'withdraws' them

<sup>3</sup> What is meant by 'will'? Is 'will' a conscious process? This topic will be dealt with separately.

<sup>4</sup> What does 'create' mean: This topic also will be dealt with separately.

through the same means, without undergoing any increase or decrease during the 'process'. The proof of this is the daily experience of each

person who goes through dream and deep sleep and 'returns' to his waking state *intact*.

NISSREYASANANDA

## SWAMI PARAMANANDA

In the July number of *The Vedanta Kesari* a bare notice of the *Mahasamadhi* of Swami Paramananda has been published in the absence of further details. We are enabled to give in this issue details of the event as we are now in possession of a very touching document sent from America by Sister Gayatri Devi.—Ed.

LONG before these words appear in print, the sad news will have reached India that once again, the Great Master, Sri Ramakrishna, has called home one of his spiritual sons—Sri-mat Swami Paramanandaji—the youngest of Swami Vivekananda's disciples.

The Swami had, for the past thirty-four years, tirelessly laboured spreading the universal message of *Sanatana Dharma* throughout the Western world, particularly in the United States of America. He has given his teaching by word of mouth, through inspired poetry and prose, and above all by his radiant living. There are those, especially in Southern India, who treasure memories of him—who saw him first as a young boy living with the great Swami Ramakrishnanandaji in the Ice-house, which constituted at that time the Ramakrishna Mission's only home in Madras. Later he appears as the newly consecrated Swami who, because of the song on his lips and his smiling springlike quality, was named Basanta or

Basanta Kokil (spring-bird) by Swami Brahmanandaji, first President of the Ramakrishna Order. Finally, many, many years later, they recalled the serene, still radiant and ever youthful figure of the mature Swami coming to visit Madras before returning to his many responsibilities in America. At that time the saying was: 'Have you seen Basanta Maharaj? Why, he has not changed at all. He is just as he was!'

Indeed, it was true to the end. At the moment he took his last, sunward flight to the feet of his Lord, Swami Brahmananda's Spring-bird retained the shining, young, joyous quality which had ever tempered his deep wisdom with the spontaneity of a little child. Even the tragic burden of the world today, which lay heavily upon him and kept sleep from his eyes, night after night, could not change the inward bliss of his nature. But his physical body was unable to endure the strain. He was pitifully tired; besides, the suffering from a hidden heart malady, which ultimately opened the door for his release, was disturbing his health. Out of compassionate care for those around him, he largely concealed the pain and rose above the fatigue, pushing himself to ever greater activity in the service of his Master. He travelled back and forth between his two large Centres, three-thousand-five-hundred miles apart at short

intervals, thus putting added pressure upon his slender physical strength. To his followers, he was like a spiritual dynamo. However, once lately, he had remarked to them, that he had received a warning but he did not give up his relentless activity. When they remonstrated with him, he would say, 'So much to be done, so little time to do it', or chide them gently for their anxiety remarking, 'Don't you know that Divine Mother is behind me?' He was so young, so alive with the Eternal that somehow they could not think he would ever die.

So it was that when on the late afternoon of June 21st about five o'clock, amid the trees of his beloved *tapovana*, the little Ashrama at Cohasset, Mass., he suddenly fell forward upon the earth, and in a short while was gone; those around him could not believe the evidence of their senses. For the benefit of his countless, loving friends, we give here an extract of a letter. It speaks of the last day of the Swami's life. In the morning, he had shown a sense of weariness and was urged to rest; but as all were busy preparing for the Eleventh Anniversary celebration of the Little Ashrama on the following day, the Swami insisted upon going ahead with his usual routine so as not to throw any added strain on his workers. For several hours he concentrated on the Vedanta Quarterly, *Message of the East*, giving it the final touch before sending it to the printer. Later, he drove his own car to Cohasset to bring back some of the helpers who had gone ahead. The letter reads 'We left Boston about a quarter to four. On the way down, we talked very little as Blessed Swamiji seemed to want to be quiet.

When we were near the Ashrama, he asked me to see if there was any news from Europe on the radio. I happened to tune in to the story of the surrender of France by the four Generals in a railroad car. He was quite moved by the description of the momentous occasion and sadly said, "No doubt as they were listening to the demands of Germany, those French Generals were saying in their hearts, "One day we shall avenge this wrong"', thus planting the seed for the next war." Then, he said, "You see they need to learn to understand each other and some day, some one will come to teach them understanding." He was very quiet after that until we reached the Ashrama. As we left the car, he said, "Listen to the birds!" He walked about a few minutes, then said again, "How the birds sing!" "In a very short time," the letter continues, "I saw him coming up the road. As he neared me, he said, "I have been in another world." I had the feeling that he had been meditating in the woodland Shrine he so loved. He spoke then to Brother Phillip about mowing the grass. Suddenly I saw him try to reach down with his hand toward the ground and before I could move, he fell. Phillip had started round the house. I called him to come and very gently we turned Swamiji over... His last words were "Don't move me yet!" He drew several deep breaths and his Spirit fled from the body.'

The next hard task was to telephone the terrible news to Boston. Naturally they refused to believe us or the testimony of the two Doctors; and we, longing to disbelieve the evidence of our senses, began to pray desperately again. The sky was so very

blue with fleecy, white clouds moving across it. There were blooming flowers nearby and the birds sang madly. I could only think as he lay there, 'The sky thy roof, the grass thy bed.'

It is impossible to state or to measure how great a shock Swami Paramananda's going has caused to countless souls, both in the Orient and the Occident. In the minds of those who knew him best, he shines with all the gentleness and beauty of a nature incapable of anger, or hatred, or any petty feelings whatsoever. From the light of his own being sprang the Boston Vedanta Centre, dignified and beautiful, with its near-by Cohasset Ashrama and his magnificent retreat, Ananda Ashrama in the mountains of California, dedicated 'to the good of many and the happiness of many', and crowned by him with the Temple of the Universal Spirit. The Centres have grown spontaneously without any hard and fast organization and with love for the Ideal as the only membership card. Sri Ramakrishna's parable of the bee and the lotus was always in Swami Paramananda's consciousness and his work was the practical application of that saying.

From the moment the tragic news began to reach the public ear, flowers poured into the Boston Vedanta Centre in great profusion. The next day, Saturday afternoon, at 4-30 o'clock the first memorial service was held. The life-sized portrait of the Swami was hung above the main altar between the two tall leaded glass windows of the Chapel. It was adorned with hundreds and hundreds of flowers amidst which it shone with a living radiance. A large number of friends came to pay their tribute crowding the Chapel and the large

adjoining hall. Swamis Yatiswarananda and Nikhilananda flew from New York, while Swami Akhilananda came from Philadelphia cancelling other engagements. Gayatri Devi, who has been Swami Paramananda's platform assistant, for fourteen years conducted the service with the aid of the Swamis who spoke loving words of appreciation. Dr. Hsieh, the Swami's Chinese friend, Miss Eleanor Mel, Head of the Boston Home of Truth, Professor Rankin of Simmons College, all took part paying their homage to the Swami.

A second service was held on Sunday morning and as the news had circulated further, a still larger number was present. Friends poured in from all directions, Washington D.C., New York, Cincinnati, and Ohio. Mr. Einar Hansen, the Boston Symphony Violinist, motored across the entire State of Massachusetts in order to make his musical offering. Gayatri Devi alone conducted the service speaking on the theme, 'Thy Will Be Done' which the Swami had chosen as his own subject that day. She poured out her devotion and faith in words that comforted and sustained, leaving a profound sense of peace in all grief-stricken hearts. Many were conscious of the Swami's triumphant presence. At three-twenty on the same afternoon, Swami Paramananda was taken to his California Ashrama escorted by two of the sisters. The final service at Ananda Ashrama, California, was held under a great oak tree in the Temple patio where the Swami had so often conducted meditation classes or moonlight services. The hour was eight-thirty on Thursday morning, June 27. In spite of the early hour and the long distance, people came

by hundreds until the extensive patio was filled to overflowing. Some came by motor, some riding all night, some by train or by airplane, and one couple drove eight hundred miles in order to be present. All sat reverently as Swami Asokananda and Swami Prabhavananda performed Homa in a new stone fire-altar which Swami Paramananda had consecrated recently. As their voices rose in deep chant, sacred Western songs mingled softly with the Sanskrit undertone forming a blending harmony symbolic of Swami's own life. Again his spiritual brothers spoke of him with appreciation while Gayatri Devi paid a simple and beautiful tribute to the one who lay completely surrounded by flowers that covered the hillside. Sister Daya read an expression of deep feeling and consecration written by the senior Sister, Devamata, in the name of the sisters and brothers of the Ashrama.

July the Fourth, the day specially set apart as a memorial to Great Swami Vivekananda, was observed with double significance. For many years, Swami Paramananda had gathered his earnest group at the Pine-sanctuary of the Ananda Ashrama, Cohasset, on that day to commemorate the liberation of his own Master. This year, the Swami's friends and followers came to pay homage to both the great Master and his devoted Spiritual son and disciple, Swami Paramananda. Upon a newly erected stone altar, were placed two pictures, Swami Vivekananda above

and Swami Paramananda below, each enshrined in a profusion of crimson roses, lilies and other flowers. Gayatri Devi conducted a two-hour silence broken occasionally by a few well-chosen words. In spite of rain and consequent dampness, a large number of people sat 'spell-bound absorbing the quiet peace that brooded over the woodland. Following the service, a Hindu dinner was served in the specious studio room of the House-under-the-tree. Later, several guests spoke glowingly, each paying the most touching tribute to their beloved leader and friend. Swami Akhilananda, the first speaker, was followed by Dr. Hsieh of China, Dr. Careno of South America, Mr. Bhambal of India, Mr. Starrick of Cincinnati, Ohio, and Miss Houghton and Mr. Ennis of Boston. Mrs. Ennis offered her homage in the form of a piano solo. The atmosphere was charged with deepest feeling and warmth of appreciation worthy of the one who for years had inspired in all hearts love and admiration.

Swami Paramananda has left this world of war and hate and cruelty for a realm where, in his own words, 'Souls of men delight in others' happiness.' We rejoice in his liberation. The life that he lived, the holiness that he emanated, cannot be lost or forgotten. He *was* what he taught others to be and such teaching will quicken many lives yet to be born, long after the grief of this parting has been covered by the dust of time.

## FAITH

'As the fish in the sea  
So live I in Thee  
Ocean of Power and Love.  
As the star in the sky  
Lonely am I  
Yet Thou art below and above.

As the bird in the air  
Swiftly flies here and there  
Yet ever returns to his nest.  
So I run to and fro  
To gather or sow  
Yet ever in Thee am at rest.

The flower in the sun  
Its ecstacy won  
Falls back to its life in the sod  
And I, when my soul  
Has reached its far goal  
Shall be consciously one with my God !'

A. L. BEGG

---

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

(1) *Studies in Vedanta*: By P. N. SRINIVASACHARI, M.A., RETIRED PRINCIPAL AND PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY, PACHAIYAPPA'S COLLEGE. PUBLISHED BY P. VARADACHARI & Co., MADRAS. 1940. PAGES 175. PRICE RE. 1.8 AS.

(2) *A Synthetic View of Vedanta*: By THE SAME AUTHOR. PUBLISHED BY THE INDIA PRINTING WORKS, MYLAPORE. 1940. PAGES 160. PRICE RE. 1.8 AS.

These two books, as their titles indicate, are concerned with the Vedanta. By the term 'Vedanta' here, however, we should understand not merely the three familiar schools of Dvaita, Advaita, and Visishtadvaita, but also other forms of the doctrine like those taught by Bhaskara in the past and by Swami Vivekananda in modern times. By such a comprehensive treatment of the subject, the volumes gain in historical interest; and their appeal, on that account, becomes much widened. There is also a welcome departure in them

from the common run of books published nowadays on the Vedanta, in that the author's aim is not so much to recount the tenets of its several Schools as to discover the harmony that underlies their teachings with a view to reconcile them. Their reconciliation is the declared purpose of the smaller of the two books, and it also forms the subject of one of the chapters of the other. This represents a refreshing and, in one sense, the most valuable aspect of the studies included here; and we shall therefore indicate, though only in a general manner, how the reconciliation is effected.

It is well known that the Upanishads, which form the chief basis of the Vedanta, lend themselves to be interpreted in different ways; but some of the differences to which the interpretations lead have no direct bearing upon their central teaching as, for instance, those relating to the nature of matter and the origin of the

physical world. Their essential value lies in the knowledge they convey about the *jiva* or the finite self, especially in its relation to God or Brahman. This is clear, as Prof. Srinivasacharya states, from the terms that have been chosen to designate the several Vedantic schools like *Dvaita* and *Advaita*, which point to the difference or identity between Brahman and the individual soul rather than to that between Brahman and the physical world. We might add that the name by which Badarayana's work is ordinarily known, *vis.*, *Sariraka-sutras* which means 'the aphorisms concerning the embodied or individual self', also draws attention to the same fact. Even when the scope of the Vedanta is thus restricted, there will, of course, remain divergences between one school and another; but none of them, according to our author, really affects the integrity of the ultimate Vedantic truth. That truth is the same for all the schools, *vis.*, the ultimacy of Brahman, on the theoretical side, and, on the practical, self-renunciation and universal love resulting in disinterested service. The points of divergence are all due to factors, more or less, external to it: such, for example, as the historical circumstances which gave birth to the particular schools. This does not, however, mean that the divergences are unimportant, but only that their importance is secondary and that therefore the choice of any from among them may well be left to individual option. For instance, one may believe, with Samkara, that in the condition of *moksa* the *jiva* is lost in Brahman or, with Ramanuja, that it only grows self-forgetful. But the point is that 'whether there is self-forgetfulness or self-negation, there is a non-dualistic experience' then, and that accordingly the two doctrines agree in this essential respect, although their theoretical outlook may not be quite the same (*Synthetic View*, p. 155).

In thus proposing to harmonize the several schools, the author is not enunciating a principle which is new or unorthodox, for it is the one recognized by Badarayana himself in explaining (III. iii: 59) the significance of the divergent *vidyas* or 'modes of meditation' taught in the Upanishads. It is also the one on which the Gita synthesizes the diverse

intuitions of the Upanishadic seers. If the doctrines are not thus reconciled, the consequence will be, as indeed it has often been, that philosophy and religion, instead of being the means of doing away with all disunion among men, become additional sources of it. We remember a renowned Indian saint saying, in regard to this question, that we would all do well to work harmoniously for our spiritual welfare until we have realized what is common to the teachings of the different schools such, for example, as cultivating *vairagya* or a spirit of absolute self-denial; and that we might thereafter wrangle over the differences, if we are still in a mood to do so then. It is often stated that the study of Indian Philosophy now is utterly barren. These volumes furnish a clear proof that the charge is false, for they show that some at least among the active minds of present-day India are endeavouring to make a constructive contribution to that philosophy without doing the least violence to the spirit underlying it. In this, we may add, they are carrying on the tradition of reinterpreting and systematizing old thought when a tendency to unduly emphasize the non-essential elements in it manifests itself.

The books, though primarily concerned with the Vedanta, allude in the course of explaining its distinctive features to nearly all the other systems of Indian Philosophy. They also contain frequent references to contemporary Western thought; and the reader will find here, especially in the first two chapters of the bigger book, an excellent conspectus of it as well as an illuminating criticism of all its chief phases from the standpoint of Hindu culture. There are several other noteworthy points in these studies such as the new and fruitful idea of 'a fraternity of faiths', comprising all the *sattvic* or higher religions of the world. Any religion or philosophy that satisfies the same logical and ethical tests as the Vedanta does, says Prof. Srinivasacharya, may be accepted as 'Vedantically valid'. But there is no space in a review like this to refer to them, however important and interesting they may be. The books are written in a lucid style, and ideas are often couched in a form which fixes them at once in our mind. The exposition is throughout

admirable. The studies, as a whole, are of great value to the general reader as well as to the specialist, and we have no doubt that they will be read and appreciated widely.

M. H.

**Shankarasiddhanta (Kannada):** BY Y. SUBBA RAO. PUBLISHED BY ADHYATMA-PRAKASHA KARYALAYA, HOLENARSIPUR. PRICE AS. 8.

Ten years ago a book entitled *Mula-vidya-Nirasa* or *Sri Sankarahridaya* written in Sanskrit was published by Mr. Y. Subba Rao. This interesting work created a mild sensation in the world of scholars, as the book was an attempt made by Mr. Rao to refute the theory of Mula-vidya attributed to Sri Sankara. The book under review, which is written in lucid Kannada, embodies some of the salient points of *Mula-vidya-Nirasa*, and is written with a view to serve as an introduction to the Sanskrit work. In this small book Mr. Rao cites some important passages from Sri Sankara's works and tries to deduce from them what he considers to be the true Advaitavada of Sri Sankara, as distinguished from the interpretations that the followers of the two schools of Advaitic thought, namely, Vivarana and Bhamati have attributed to him. The author of this book does not believe that Sri Padmapada, one of the direct disciples of Sri Sankara, was the author of *Pancha-padika*, on which the whole of Vivarana school rests; and he finds also the rudiments of Mula-vidya in this work, which was later on elucidated by Prakasatmayati in his Vivarana. Mr. Rao tries to prove that the term 'Mula-vidya' or primordial ignorance never occurs in Sri Gaudapada's, Sri Sankara's, or Sri Suresvaracharya's

works. According to Mr. Rao, Vachaspatimishra also, who has taken clue from Mandanmishra, does not strictly follow the Advaitavada of Sri Sankara, though there is no evidence of his accepting Mula-vidya, in spite of Amalananda's reading of it in Bhamati.

The true Advaitavada of Sri Sankara in the light of Mr. Rao's exposition is that the highest truth to be realized is the non-dual Brahman who is *Satyam*, *Jnanam* and *Anantam*. Apart from Brahman there is neither Jiva nor Jagat; and everything else is a superimposition (*Adhyasa*) on Him. This *Adhyasa* is known as *Avidya* and has no cause for its production. *Avidya* consists in identifying the Self with the non-self, that is, thinking that so-and-so is the doer and the enjoyer, having body, mind, Prana, etc. When this superimposition which is in the form of wrong conception shall give place to knowledge of the Unity of Self, release is attained then and there.

The very existence of so many varying views in Advaitavada itself goes to prove that each commentator is trying to understand the mind of Sri Sankara in his own light according to his intellectual and spiritual attainments. It will be preposterous if one says, 'My interpretation of Sankara is the only correct one'. Whether *Avidya* persists in *Sushupti* or not, whether *Prarabdha-karma* still clings to *Jivanmukta* or lets him go, whether release is attained immediately after the understanding of 'Tatvamasi' and whether the practice of *Dharana*, *Dhyana*, and *Samadhi* has to continue still, are problems that are best left to the individual seeker. The present writer's attempt to clarify the issues deserves respectful attention from all students of Sri Sankara.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

**The Ramakrishna Mission  
Vidyamandira at Belur**

'Swami' Madhavananda, Secretary, The Ramakrishna Mission, writes:—

Today the feeling is widespread that the system of education that is in vogue in India has failed not only to educate our young people on national lines but also to

meet the peculiar need of the hour and provide a general basis of sound living. Its effects are already visible in the form of unemployment among the youth, which has assumed disquieting proportions, menacing the socio-economic structure of the country. Education has not prepared the boys for the hard battle of life, as it



has not endowed them with the qualities of fortitude, sacrifice and leadership which are important factors of success. Without an employment, because there is a glut in the clerical services, they stare helplessly at the future. It is therefore imperative that a start should be made somewhere to remedy these evils.

Swami Vivekananda, who long ago saw the inadequacy of this system of education, foreshadowed the establishment of a national University with a view to educating the youths of our country on the lines of the ancient Gurukula. Swamiji, shortly after his installation of the sacred relics of his great Master at the Belur Math, the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Order, was extremely eager to start a Vidyamandira there, having religion as its pivot and combining both theoretical and practical aspects of Oriental and Occidental learning. But his untimely passing away prevented an early fulfilment of his desire. Now the authorities of the Ramakrishna Mission, have, after much serious thought, decided to make a definite move to launch the scheme. They hope that from modest beginnings a mighty system best suited to the needs of the country may be evolved in course of time.

Broadly speaking, the Vidyamandira will consist of three main sections—Arts, Science and Industry. In the Arts section, in addition to the ordinary University curriculum, there will be arrangements for vocational training. Facilities will also be provided for study and research work in comparative religion, philosophy, arts and culture, aided by a well-equipped library. It is also the aim of this section to help students from different parts of India and abroad to study Indian culture under the guidance of competent scholars. It is further hoped to start in course of time a branch for the training of teachers for the propagation of the right type of education among people.

The special feature of the Science section will be its laboratory, which will in time be developed into a centre of research, particularly in relation to the industrial development of the country.

The Industrial section will have various departments and train boys for independent careers in trade, manufacture and industrial pursuits. The Mission has also in view

the addition of an agricultural branch including dairy to this section.

The above is a bare outline of the vast scope that lies before the Vidyamandira, which in the fullness of time will develop into an independent University containing branches and departments which it is too early to forecast.

The plan is now getting into shape. To make a beginning it is proposed to start in 1941 an Intermediate Arts College of a residential type. Later on we should like to develop it into a first grade College and add other sections as soon as the requisite funds are available.

The site selected for the Vidyamandira is an extensive plot of land measuring about 17 acres lying between the Belur Math and the Grand Trunk Road. Some portion of it has already been purchased, and the rest is being acquired through the Land Acquisition Department of the Government. Two buildings—one for the College and another for a hostel accommodating one hundred students—are under construction. Relying on the support of our countrymen we have ventured to proceed with the work with the small amount of money at our disposal. A sum of Rs. 28,000 has been donated in cash or kind and Rs. 12,000 promised by a few of our friends. We still need at least Rs. 30,000 more for the initial cost of land, buildings, etc.

We need not emphasise the necessity of an institution of this kind. It is, as stated above, the humble beginning of a great experiment and will take its own time to yield any spectacular result. But a great deal of its success will depend on the hearty co-operation of our benevolent countrymen, specially those who feel the urgency of such an educational undertaking. We have no doubt that those who are deeply concerned about the proper education of our youths will generously contribute their quota towards making the scheme an accomplished fact. Any contribution for the Vidyamandira may kindly be sent to the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.Q. Belur Math, District Howrah.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA,  
Secretary,  
Ramakrishna Mission.

15-9-40.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOLUME XXVII



NUMBER 7

NOVEMBER, 1940.

## THE TWENTY-FOUR TEACHERS OF A SAINT

त्वत्कारुण्ये प्रवृत्ते क इव न हि गुरुलोकवृत्तेऽपि भूमन् ।  
सर्वाकान्तापि भूमिर्न हि चलति ततः सत्समां शिष्येयम् ।  
गृहीयामीश । तत्तद्विषयपरिचयेऽप्यप्रसक्तिं समीराद्  
व्याप्तत्वं चात्मनो मे गगनगुरुवशाद् भातु निलेपता च ॥

When, O Lord, Thy grace has begun to flow in, who would not possibly be a guru even in matters of behaviour in the world? O Thou Great One, may I learn from the earth excellent patience; for it never quails though it is loaded with all things. May I, O Thou Ruler of all, imbibe from wind the quality of detachment; for we find, in spite of its association with the various objects through which it passes, it remains uncontaminated. May I also learn the virtue of pervasiveness and purity, in respect of the Self, from the analogy of the sky which is infinite and untainted (1).

स्वच्छः स्यां पावनोऽहं मधुर उदकवद् बह्विन्मा स्म गृह्णां  
सर्वाभिनोऽपि दोषं तरुषु तमिव मां सर्वभूतेष्ववेद्याम् ।  
पुष्टिर्नष्टिः कलानां शशिर्न इव तनोर्नात्मनोऽस्तीति विद्यां  
तोयादिव्यस्तमार्तण्डवदपि च तनुष्वेकतां त्वत्प्रसादात् ॥

May I be pure and holy like the sweet water. Though sustained by food supplied by all, may I not be tainted by any evil thereof, even as the fire that consumes whatever comes to it. Even as the fire

latent in wood, may I realize the presence of my Self in all beings. May I know from the moon, which is never extinguished in spite of its waxing and waning, the constancy of the Self, although the body is attended with growth and decay. May I also, through Thy grace, learn the unity of all existence in the created manifold from the illustration of the one sun who appears as many in moving liquids like water (2).

जैहाद् व्याप्तास्तपुत्रप्रणयमृतकपोतायितो मा स्म भवं  
प्राप्तं प्राप्नन् सहेय क्षुधमपि शयुवत् सिन्धुवत् स्यामगाधः ।  
मा पतं योषिदादौ शिखिनि शलभवद् भृङ्गवत् सारभागी  
भूयासं किन्तु तद्वद् धनचयनवशान्माहमीश ! प्रणेशम् ॥

Through fondness, may I not be doomed to the fate of the pigeon which got entangled in the noose spread out by the hunter, in its attempt to save the shrieking young ones. May I learn the lesson of bearing hunger and contentment with the food got by chance from the example of the Boa constrictor. May I be as profound as the ocean. Like the moth may I not fall a prey to the fire of sex craving and the like. Let it be my lot to alight upon nectar alone like the honey-bee (and not to be like the fly that sits on both flower and filth); but may I not court perdition, O Lord, like it by the habit of accumulating wealth for enjoyment (3).

मा बध्यासं तरुण्या गज इव वशया नार्जयेयं धनौघं  
हर्तान्यस्तं हि माध्वीहर इव मृगवन्मा मुहुं ग्राम्यगीतैः ।  
नात्यासजेय भोज्ये ऋष इव बडिशे पिङ्गलावजिराशः  
मुप्यां भर्तव्ययोगात् कुरर इव विभो ! सामिषोऽन्यैर्न हन्ये ॥

May I not be enthralled by the other sex as the male elephant decoyed by the female one. May I not pile up riches; for it is sure to be robbed by others, even as the honey gathered by the bees is looted by honey-seekers. May I not be dangerously fascinated by secular music even as the deer in the forest which is enticed into traps by hunters with the help of melodious tunes. May I not be a gourmand, as it would prove ruinous even as it is in the case of the fish attracted by the delicious bait. Like Pingala (who had no sleep, as she was anxiously waiting for richer clients, so also) may I not be expectant and peaceless in mind. Like the osprey carrying a bit of meat in its mouth and was assaulted by a flight of other birds, similarly may I not be destroyed along with the possessions, because of anxious clinging to them (4).

वर्तेय त्यक्तमानः सुखमतिशिशुवभित्सहायक्षरेय  
 कन्याया एकशेषो बलय इव विभो ! वज्रितान्योन्यबोधः ।  
 त्वच्छित्तो नावबुध्यै परस्मिपुष्टिदिव क्षमाभृदायानबोधं  
 गेहेष्वन्यप्रणीतेष्वहिरिव निवसान्युन्दुरोमैन्दिरेषु ॥

May I remain perpetually bereft of all conceit like an innocent child. May I learn from the single silent bangle of the maiden the moral that I should move about alone, lest I should indulge in twaddle in the company of others. May my mind, steeped in the Divine, be impervious to alien thoughts, even as the mind of the archer lost in his aim was oblivious of the stir of a royal procession. May I seek shelter under roofs vacated by others like the snake that makes its dwelling in rats' burrows. Lord, Thou projectest, sustainest, and reabsorbest the universe from, in, and into, Thyself.—May I learn this truth from the spider that acts similarly in respect of its web (5).

त्वय्येव त्वत्कृतं त्वं क्षपयसि जगदित्यूर्णनामात् प्रतीयां  
 त्वच्छिन्ता त्वत्स्वरूपं कुरुत इति दृढं शिक्षये पेशकारात् ।  
 विद्भस्मात्मा च देहो भवति गुरुवरो यो विवेकं विरक्तिं  
 घते सञ्चिन्त्यमानो मम तु बहुरुजापीडितोऽयं विशेषात् ॥

Contemplation upon Thee transfigures one into Thine own form.—May I learn this fact firmly from the wasp (which is believed to transform, by occasioning its own thought in the mind, a larva belonging to another insect imprisoned in its cocoon). Finally, may my own body subjected to several ailments be my excellent teacher, as I gain discrimination and renunciation by reflecting upon its nature—for, will it not be converted to excreta, if consumed by carnivore, or reduced to ashes by the funeral fire, no sooner than life quits it (6)?

NARAYANA BHATTA: *Narayaniya*, XCIII: 3-8.

## HOLY WATERS

**Dr. V. Raghavan, M.A., Ph.D.**, is a brilliant scholar of the Madras University, very much interested in Sanskrit research. He has published many important papers in the field, and also made some valuable translations and editions of distinctive works. At present he is connected with the preparation of the magnificent 'Catalogus Catalogorum' projected by the same Univer-

sity. The following interesting paper reproduces the substance of a lecture which he delivered during the Navaratri, 1939, at the Ramakrishna Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras.—Ed.

CLEANLINESS is next to godliness. The *Padmapurana* says that purity of body and mind can be had only through a bath, and hence it is that

a bath is enjoined at the beginning of all our acts of piety and worship.<sup>1</sup> The waters are our chief purifiers, and all religions use water for purification. Our Vedas especially abound in hymns on the waters; and some of these hymns, we have included in our daily Sandhya prayers. *Rigveda*, X: 9.1-3 sing of the waters thus: 'O Waters, you are the source of happiness; so impart strength to us; endow us with vision, great and beautiful. That water of yours in this world which would bring us utmost happiness, make us resort to it,—like loving mothers. We resort to you speedily for the removal of that evil by which you gratify us. You verily create us.'<sup>2</sup> The *Taittiriya Aranyaka* prays: 'May the waters be very friendly to us.'<sup>3</sup> The same *Aranyaka* glorifies the waters in another magnificent passage where the poet sees water as everything: 'All this is only water; all the beings are but water; life-breaths, animals, food, nectar,—all these are but water' and so on.<sup>4</sup> One expression here must be especially noted, namely, the poet's description of water as light, 'Jyotimshi apah.' A Tamil poet also invoked the Kaveri as Lamp, and we are actually seeing our hydro-electric schemes today fulfilling the poet's exclamation. In this connection I must not fail to

refer to the story of the Saiva Saint of Tiruvarur who made the lamps in the shrine of God Achalesvara burn with the water of the Kamalalayam tank. The *Taittiriya Aranyaka* again tells us why we resort to the waters; 'Within the waters, there is immortality, there is medicine.'<sup>5</sup> The *Atharvaveda* calls upon the waters to be our medicine and protection to ensure a long life to us.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout the Vedas, we find a water-mysticism; 'water is the first creation'; 'at first, all this was water'; 'all this is indeed but water.'<sup>7</sup> There are many Upasanas of the Upanishads leading to Brahmaprasana, in one of which, the *Chandogya Upanishad* speaks of an Upasana of the waters. Sanatkumara tells Narada: '...Therefore, all these perceptible things, this earth, this sky, this heaven, these mountains, these gods and men, animals and birds, grasses and trees, beasts of prey, worms, flies and ants,—all these things having some form or other,—all these are but water. Contemplate upon the waters. He who meditates upon the waters as Brahman attains all his desires.'<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> अस्वन्तरमृतं, अप्सु भेषजम् ।

<sup>6</sup> आपः पृणीत भेषजं वरुण्य तन्वे मम ।  
ज्योक् च सूर्यं दृशे ।

<sup>7</sup> आपो वा इदमग्रे सलिलमासीत् ।  
आपो वा इदं सर्वम् ।

<sup>8</sup> ...इत्याप एव इमा मूर्ताः, येयं पृथिवी,  
यदन्तरिक्षं, यद् द्यौः, यत्पर्वताः, यदेवम-  
नुष्याः यत्पशवश्च वयांसि च, दृग्वन-  
स्पतयः, आपदानि आकीटपतङ्गपिपीलिकं,  
आप एव इमा मूर्ता, आप उपास्तेति । स योऽ-  
पो ब्रह्मेत्युपास्त आप्नोति सर्वान् कामान्...

<sup>1</sup> नैर्मल्यं भावशुद्धिश्च विना स्नानं न विद्यते ।  
तस्मान्मनोविशुद्धयर्थं स्नानमादौ विधीयते ॥

<sup>2</sup> आपो हि हाः etc.

<sup>3</sup> सुमिला न आपः सन्तु ।

<sup>4</sup> आपो वा इदं सर्वम्, विश्वा भूतान्यापः,  
प्राणा वा आः, पशव आपः, अश्वमापः,  
अमृतमापः, ... ज्योतीषि आपः ... सत्यमापः  
सर्वा देवता आपः, भूर्भुवस्सुवराप ओम् ।

The Upanishads speak of Brahman as Rasa; water is Rasa; God says in the *Gita* that He is the Essence in the waters.<sup>9</sup> In the *Vishnusahasranama* we find that God is called 'Tirthakara';<sup>10</sup> it is the presence of divinity that makes the waters holy. It is from God that the rivers flow, says the *Taittiriya Aranyaka*.<sup>11</sup>

There is a Tamil saying that a town without a river is barren of beauty. Surely some of the best views of Nature are afforded by the rivers and it is with an equal sense of beauty as of piety that we are revering almost all our rivers as divine. A river-side is the best place for a town population to repair to in the mornings and evenings for their Sandhya meditations. When Hanuman was searching for Sita in the Asokavana, he came across a beautiful river and at once he concluded that, were Sita alive, she would go to that river for her Sandhya prayer.<sup>12</sup> Sita was a great lover of rivers: When Rama said he was going to the forest singly, Sita told him that she loved the rivers and the mountains, and that she would bathe in those rivers everyday.<sup>13</sup> When Sita was not to be seen, having been carried away by Ravana, Rama immediately

thought that Sita must have gone to the Godavari.<sup>14</sup>

It is these reasons that have made us revere the rivers. The *Rigveda* refers to ten holy rivers; the *Mahabharata* mentions one hundred and sixty of them; and in the *Ramayana*, we find that, for Rama's coronation, waters were brought from about five hundred Tirthas. The Puranas describe the rivers and the merits of bathing in them *in extenso*. Sthala-mahatmyas (local glorifications) make out every rivulet to be sacred; the idea behind such local glorification is that every unit must be an epitome of the whole. Certainly all the rivers are holy. Of these, the *Madanaparijata* says, that all rivers falling into the sea are holy.<sup>15</sup> Rivers are more holy at certain places, at their origin, at confluences with other rivers, and at the place where they fall into the sea. Some rivers are especially sacred at certain places, like the Ganges at Gangadvara, Kasi, and Prayaga. The association of saints and sages render certain river-spots more holy. The *Bhagavata* says that sages, under pretext of going to Tirthas, go about creating Tirthas.<sup>16</sup> Every Tirtha would seem to have a previous sacred association with the life of a great soul.

The history of some of our rivers are most exalting when we contemplate on its moral. These rivers are

१०सोहमप्सु कौन्तेय

१०मनोजवः तीर्थकरः वसुरेता वसुप्रदः ।

११अतः समुद्राः गिरयश्च सर्वे

अस्मात्स्यन्दन्ते सिन्धवः सर्वरूपाः ।

१२सन्ध्याकालमनाः श्यामा ध्रुवमेध्यति जानकी ।

नदी चेमां शुभजलां सन्ध्यायै वरवर्णिनी ॥

यदि जीवति सा देवी ताराधिपनिमानना ।

आगमिष्यति साऽव्यभिचारां शिवजलां नदीम् ।

१३इच्छामि सरितः शौकान् ।

१४गोदावरीयं सरितां वरिष्ठा

प्रिया प्रियाया मम नित्यकालम् ।

अप्यत्र गच्छेदिति चिन्तयामि

१५सर्वाः समुद्रगाः पुण्याः

१६प्रायेण तीर्थाभिगमापदेशैः

स्वयं हि तीर्थानि पुनन्ति सन्तः ।

said to be transformations of great souls. We find, for example, the story of the river Kausiki in the 'Balakanda' of the *Ramayana*. Visvamitra was doing penance on the banks of the Kausiki, because there was greatness and nobility about that river. Kausiki was previously called Satyavati and she was the elder sister of Visvamitra. She was given in marriage to Richika and, with her body intact, she followed her lord to heaven. But magnanimous Satyavati could not enjoy the heavenly state; for the good of the world she descended again, transforming herself into the river Kausiki.<sup>17</sup> Similarly the great Ganges is associated with the heroic story of Bhagiratha who strove for uplifting his fallen forefathers.

Some rivers are rendered doubly sacred by the presence of temples on their banks. Hence comes the importance of Tirthayatra, or pilgrimages, to holy waters, for the development of Bhakti. The *Bhagavata* says that devotion is created by visits to holy Tirthas.<sup>18</sup>

The institution of Tirthayatra is one of the wonderful aspects of Hindu life, whether it is looked at from the secular or from the religious point of view. Tirthayatra is a regular stage in a man's life; it is sometimes a boon of peace and solace to an afflicted heart, and sometimes it forms

a solution to a mind in perplexity and faced with problems. The pilgrimages of Balarama and Vidura are instances in point, as also that of the brothers in the 'Vanaparvan' of the *Mahabharata*. The *Mahabharata* clearly states the significance of Tirthayatra. Pulastya tells Bhishma in the Great Epic that elaborate Yajnas (sacrificial rites) could be afforded only by kings and rich men, and the Yajna of the poor man is Tirthayatra. Tirthayatra is best done on foot,<sup>19</sup> and must always be done in proper spirit (Bhavana); the spirit is essential.<sup>20</sup>

There are some parts of the year when baths in rivers are more meritorious, as, for instance, baths in the Kaveri in the month of Tula (October-November) and in the month of Magha (January-February) in all rivers. On the merit of baths in the Kaveri in Tula, there is a vast account called 'Tula-kaveri-mahatmya' in the *Agnipurana*. Three days at least are very important for holy bath, Makarasamkramana, Rathasaptami, and Magha Purnamasi. The merit of daily baths in rivers during Magha, Maghamahatmya, is given at length in Puranas like the *Padma*. 'In the month of Magha, as the Sun is just rising, the waters cry out, "Which sinner shall we purify?"'<sup>21</sup>

Smritis like that of Atri and Katayana specify the months in which alone baths could be had in some rivers; at other times, those rivers

१७ पूर्वजा भगिनी चापि मम राख सुवत् ।  
नाम्ना सत्यवती नाम ऋषीके प्रतिपादिता ॥  
सशरीरा गता स्वर्ग भर्तारमनुवर्तिनी ।  
कौशिकी परमोदारा प्रवृत्ता च महानदी ॥  
दिव्या पुण्योदका रम्या हिमवन्तमुपाश्रिता ।  
लोकस्य हितं नामार्थं प्रवृत्ता भगिनी मम ॥

१८ शुश्रूषोः ब्रह्मानस्य वासुदेवकथाकचिः ।  
स्यान्महत्सेवया विप्राः पुण्यतीर्थनियेवकात् ॥

१९ पद्भ्यां तथ चतुर्युगम् ।

२० मन्त्रे तीर्थे द्विजे देवे दैवज्ञे मेवजे गुरो ।  
यादृशी भावना यस्य सिद्धिर्भवति तादृशी ॥

२१ माघमासे रटन्यापः किञ्चिदभ्युदिते रवौ ।  
ब्रह्मन्नं वा सुरार्पं वा कं पतन्तं पुनीमहे ॥

are not considered sufficiently pure. But no such restriction applies to the Ganges which is always pure and has no unhealthy seasons. The waters of Ganges are found to be great destroyers of injurious bacteria. Smritis also say that the first freshes of a river should be avoided.

With reference to a Tirtha, the following observances are specified: Smarana, Vasa, Vapana, Dana, Snana, and Marana. Vapana is parting with one's hairs and it is said to be very meritorious, if done at Prayaga.<sup>22</sup> Vasa is living and it is most meritorious to live on the banks of the Ganges; Kshetrasannyasa is to take a vow not to stir out of a spot on the Ganges. Smarana is thought and meditation; the contemplation of the Ganges is of high efficacy.<sup>23</sup> Marana is shuffling off of the mortal coil, and it is to be desired that one should die at Benares or Prayaga. Kalidasa in one of his works makes Aja attain heaven by leaving his body at the confluence of the Ganges and the Sarayu.<sup>24</sup> In his *Raghuvamsa*, XIII: 58, the poet eloquently describes the magnificent confluence at Prayaga, and says that to those who bathe there and die there, salvation is ensured.<sup>25</sup> The *Asvalayana-pari-*

*sishta-sruti* also promises immortality to those who bathe or die at Prayaga.<sup>26</sup>

Of the rivers of our land those that we remember everyday are the Ganges, the Yamuna, the Godavari, the Sarasvati, the Narmada, the Sindhu, and the Kaveri. The greatness of the Kaveri is sung of in Puranas like the *Tulakaverimahatmya*. A very large number of shrines are found on its banks. God Vishnu is sleeping on its banks at four sacred spots, and poets like Nilakanthadikshita have sung of the talents for poetry, music, and wit which its delta bestows upon its inhabitants. The Mahatmyas of the Godavari and the Krishna are collected in the 'Tirthasara' section of the *Nrisimhaprasada*. Nasik and Tryambaka are the most holy of the places on the Gautami or the Godavari. The Narmada is the river from whose banks many of the present-day Tamil Brahmins migrated in the past, and hence it is that, everyday, they say a prayer to this river during their Sandhya worship.<sup>27</sup> The *Matsya* and *Kurma* Puranas describe Narmadamahatmya and it is said in these Puranas that Narmada was born of Siva's body. Prayagamahatmya is found in the *Kurma*, *Matsya*, *Markandeya*, *Varaha*, *Padma*, and *Agni* Puranas.

The importance of Prayaga and Kasi, along with Gaya, forms the

<sup>22</sup> प्रयागे वपनं कुर्याद् गयायां पिण्डपातनम् ।

दानं कुर्याद् कुरुक्षेत्रे वाराणस्यां तदुं त्यजेत् ॥

<sup>23</sup> गङ्गा गङ्गेति यो ब्रूयाद् योजनानां शतैरपि ।  
मुच्यते सर्वपापेभ्यः... ॥

<sup>24</sup> तीर्थे तोयव्यतिकरभवे जडुकन्यासरन्ध्रोः  
देहत्यागादमरगणना लेख्यमासाद्य सद्यः ।

<sup>25</sup> समुद्रपत्न्योर्जलसन्निपाते पूतात्मनामत्र  
किलाभिषेकात् ॥

तत्त्वान्नोद्येन विनापि भूयः तनुयन्तां  
नास्ति शरीरबन्धः ॥

<sup>26</sup> सितासिते सरिते यत् सङ्गते तत्राप्नुतासौ  
दिशमुत्पतन्ति ।

ये वै तन्वं विच्छजन्ति धीराः ते जनासौ  
अमृतत्वं भजन्ते ॥

<sup>27</sup> नर्मदायै नमः प्रातः नर्मदायै नमो निशी ।  
नमोऽस्तु नर्मदे तुभ्यम्..... ॥



subject of a number of books like the *Tristhalisetus* of Narayanabhatta and Bhattojidikshita and the *Tir-thendusekhara* of Nagesabhatta. Kasi claims a special Purana in 'Kasi-kanda' and there are books dealing specially with Kasi like Suresvacharya's *Kasimokshavichara*, Balam-bhatta's *Avimuktatattva*, and the *Panchakrosimahatmya*. Kasi is called the Mahasmasana, the 'Great crematorium' where we burn our mundane bodies and are born into light and bliss; hence is it called also the Anandavana, the jungle of joy. Kasi is the heart of Hindustan.

कलौ वाराणसी पुरी । कलौ भागीरथी गङ्गा

वदन्ति काशीं प्रणमन्ति काशीं

गच्छन्ति काशीं तव राजधानीम् ।

पूजाजपस्नानपरिक्रमस्तुति-

क्रमैर्गता यन्ति परं सदाशिवम् ॥

The Ganges is the main blood-vessel of Hinduism. The story of the descent of the Ganges is most ennobling. In the 'Balakanda' of the *Ramayana*, Visvamitra tells Rama that the Himalayas gave the Ganges for the weal of the three worlds, heaven, earth, and Patala, for the purpose of Dharma.<sup>28</sup>

In the heavens, the Ganges gave God Kumara and saved Indraloka; on the earth, she saves us all, and in the Patala, she uplifted Sagara's

sons.<sup>29</sup> The Ganges still uplifts the Pitris (manes), if their mortal bones come into contact with its water. The very reading of the story of the descent of the Ganges during the Sraddha ceremony propitiates the manes.<sup>30</sup> There were dark days of Hinduism when Hindus were even denied free access to their sacred river; and in those days Sannyasins of Benares like Nrisimhasarma and Kavindracharya impressed upon the Moghul emperors the greatness of Hinduism and got the 'Jessia' on Tirthas abolished. The Gangayatra is the crown of one's existence on this holy soil of Bharatavarsha; the Gangajala in a pot is part of our household pantheon. Indeed, all water drunk is Gangamrita. Wherever we are, whatever the water we resort to, it is all the holy waters of the sacred rivers of our land; as we bathe and invoke the great rivers, they gush in our tank or tap,—the Ganga, the Yamuna, the Sarasvati the Sindhu, the Narmada, the Godavari, and the Kaveri.

गङ्गे च यमुने चैव गोदावरि सरस्वति ।

नर्मदे सिन्धु कावेरि जलेस्मिन् सन्निधिं कुरु ॥

V. RAGHAVAN

<sup>28</sup> शापात् प्रपतिता ये च गगनाद् बभूवुः सप्तधातलम् ।

कृत्वा तत्रामिषेकं ते बभूवुः गतकल्मषाः ॥

मुमुदे मुदितो लोकः तेन तोयेन भास्वता ।

कृतामिषेको गङ्गायां बभूव विगतक्लमः ॥

<sup>30</sup> धन्यं यशस्यमायुष्यं पुत्र्यं स्वर्ग्यमतीव च ।

यः श्रावयति विप्रेषु क्षत्रियेष्वितरेषु च ।

प्रीयन्ते पितरस्तस्य प्रीयन्ते दैवतानि च ॥

<sup>29</sup> ददौ धर्मेण हिमवान् तनयां लोकपावनीम् ।

स्वच्छन्दपथगां गङ्गां त्रैलोक्यहितकाम्यया ॥

## RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE TANTRAS

**Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar, M.A., Ph.D.,** is the author of *Comparative Studies in the Vedanta, System of the Vedantic Thought and Culture, Mysticism in the Bhagavadgita, Hindu Mysticism According to the Upanishads, Eastern Lights*, and other thoughtful works. A few years ago he visited the important centres of learning in Europe, on invitation, to interpret the cultural ideals of India. This is the fourth instalment of a series of articles on the Mysticism of the Tantras which he is contributing for *The Vedanta Kesari*.  
—Ed.

RELIGION is closely associated with art. Religion is integrative, art creative. It is self-immersion. Religious aspiration is the yearning after 'the visitation of the living God'. The spiritual life has two movements: (1) to free itself from the cob-web of the mazes of life, instinctive, vital, and mental; and (2) to establish a direct connection between the central being and the fountain source of existence. And this is followed by direct infusion of our being with the spiritual charges. A supreme puissance seizes our being and a new expression in spirituality takes place. Religious consciousness may imply the sense of the infinite; the temporary dropping of the creative expressions and the self-loss in the Eternal silence and Peace—the recovery of the lost Paradise. But this is followed by decent expression of spirit through all the strata of our existence, transmuting every part of our existence and calling to service the forces of our being. Spirit seizes

our whole being. Its call is imperious. It brooks no challenge. It tolerates no resistance. It demands allegiance from the complete being in order that its balming influence can impose itself everywhere making a better and wider expression possible. The divine art exhibits the working of forces, their beauties, their rhythms, their harmonies, in order that man may outgrow his partial and limited expressions of an unilluminated personality. Religion inspires art. The religious art informs this new creative power. The architectonic form and inspiration emerge from a subtle height.

This creative expression in spiritual life does not take away from it the grace of a divine union; for once the spirit seizes, it never leaves its charge. The spirit has in it a creative necessity and naturally the two movements run concurrently. Spirit can maintain the easy flow of creation along with its luminous silence. Its expression becomes easy because it makes the instrument soft and plastic.

The Tantras lay emphasis upon an identification with the creative will and therefore in the Tantras the personal will is raised to the supreme height and power, not by denying its concreteness and definite functioning, but by reinforcing it by the supreme will.

This identification is the natural sequence of our spiritual quest, for spirit shakes off its loneliness and helplessness, and the field of its limited play by affiliating itself to the centre of divine light and power.

Spirituality has no meaning, far less, any charm, if there is not some form of identification with supreme puissance and existence. This identification may be complete or partial, static or dynamic; but none can disown it. This is its unique attraction and unique promise. The greatest attraction in spirituality lies in not acquainting us with the supreme truth, but with the supreme puissance and felicity; for spirit is essentially that. The appeal of religion lies that way. Truth is the quest of philosophy, puissance and felicity of religion. And this becomes permanently possible by discovering in us the identification of our being with the supreme felicity—this identification can alone make the promise fulfilled, by removing the sense of separateness. Naturally all religions make the promise of wider being, a richer and finer delight as the supreme goal of our existence; and nothing short of it can ever have any significance or attraction. The Tantras recover the life-impulse in spirituality, for they are ever awake to the spiritual formation in creative expression, they have not ignored the terrestrial expression of spirit in the different layers of existence and they take supreme interest in their terrestrial functioning without losing its reference to its central locus in the transcendence. Hence the Tantras can see the values of all forms of spiritual expression from its most rudimentary to its loftiest forms, for they see in religion the functioning of life and spirit-impulse. The opening of the wide amplitude of becoming makes it possible for the Tantras to embrace the spiritualistic tendencies expressed in every form of religious inspiration, and this explains the rather appa-

rently incongruous position of them in affiliating the contradictory conceptions of spirituality. The Tantras do not go by the rigid intellectual formations, and in the setting of life they find no contradiction in varied spiritual forms and thought-casts. This acceptance of life-impulse and will-force and their final reference to the supreme will and puissance give a special grace and character to the mysticism of the Tantras, for it does not go by the spirit of rejection. Its spirit of acceptance is inspired by insight into the truer and diviner nature of the moving impulses and their formations. It can immediately see the archetypal setting, the aesthetic beauties, and moral sublimities in the creative expression; and what is more, their spiritual significance and meaning. To the mystic, vital, aesthetic, and artistic impulses acquire true meaning when they are envisaged as spiritual expressions and spiritual formations. This lends an additional grace to them which they lack in their normal presentations.

Here is the supreme effort of the Tantras; to trace out all the creative forces, to acquaint us with the joy in creation, to bring out the supreme felicities of spirit in its blissful expressions, and finally to pass into the transcendent. All these have become possible, because the Tantras read the whole texture of our being first hand, through psychic insight; and they divinize all the forces that are working there.

The Tantras give full satisfaction to religious consciousness and pass eventually into philosophic wisdom. Religion inspires moral and aesthetic beatitude by focussing our being upon God and inspiring communion

with Him. It, according to the Tantras, releases fine occult forces by pressing the different psychic centres of our being. It moves hidden forces of our nature into creative channels and widens our consciousness to embrace reality in its transcendental dignity and immanent sublimity. Religion saturates our whole being in all its strata with freshness and fervour. The religious consciousness is not an occasional attitude of divine fellowship. It is the re-making of man in such a way that his entire being responds to the spiritual urge and receives it through all the grades of his consciousness. It really moves our being in Divine chime. The original impulses are thus beatified, and nothing remains in man which is not God's. Religion is not a temporary sentiment, a passing feeling. It establishes the permanent habitat of God in man. The vital rejuvenation and quickness, the emotional intensity and grace, the suppleness and the plasticity of our being are all afforded by religious consciousness—but the excess of emotional expression and the concentration thereto has been the cause of separating spiritual enthusiasm from philosophic wisdom. This has been possible because of confining life-impulse to religion and thought-impulse to philosophy.

The Tantras do not entertain such a division, for thought is the cast of life and is immanent in life. And it accepts its help and instrumentality in so far as it reflects light on life-impulses and their adjustments, for ultimately religion is the expression of spirit and its yearning after the enduring and the eternal. This impulse is the greatest in man, and therefore religious consciousness ultimately

must overcome the emotional concentration and pass into the still higher reaches of rarefied consciousness in its sublime silence and transcendence. The Tantras do not lose sight of this height of spiritual experience. It is true Wisdom, where the process of becoming and its synthetic setting are withdrawn in the inscrutable Being. Religion there passes from a devotional and emotional experience and from the concordant movement of will to the transcendent and serene peace.

Religion ordinarily is so much associated with life-impulse that it is not easy to see the wisdom of this conclusion. The Tantras more than any scriptures of the Hindus have acknowledged the supremacy of life-impulse and the creative will and consiring, but they have not been slow to recognize the indubitable supremacy of transcendence and silence to creative impulse and readily accept it as a far superior spiritual consummation. To ignore this is to ignore the completeness of spiritual life...to fail to recognize the supreme puissance and transcendence of spirit. Of course, in this respect the Tantras do not advance uniform Advaitic opinion. Some of them are after the Vedantic Monism, some (Kashmere school) after Pan-Advaitic Monism (the Pratyabhijna Vada of Abhinava Gupta) and some after the Vaishnavic inspiration. The former two accept the trans-creative character of Sakti, while the Vedantic inspiration emphasizes its complete transcendence in the absolutistic consciousness. The Pratyabhijna School does not go the length of complete denial and transcendence of Sakti. It retains it in the supreme as a force of consiring.

The Tantras do not agree with those who identify religion exclusively with the fine dynamism of spirit; for they have the deeper intuition of luminous silence behind the creative urges of the spirit. Spirit conspires, but it does not change. It remains what it is, even when it individuates. It is what it is. This is final religion and philosophy. Spiritual consciousness is the acceptance of the transcendent truth by the unfolding of our psychic nature. It acquaints our psychic nature with the progressive realization of spiritual experiences in the path of ascent. The stretched-out, graded, striving, world of the biological evolutionist, the many-sided universe of the psychical relativist, and the space-time manifold of realist philosophy, ignored by the religious mind, have not been ignored by the Tantras. They have been grasped and affiliated to the supreme reality known in religious experiences. They are true in the reference of their order, and are accepted as presenting partially the blissful conspiring. Naturally religious life outgrows them in its aspiration after the fuller and finer conspiring, and is, therefore, a finer emergence in which the partial presentations are accommodated and integrated.

The spiritual path is laid up with intermediate grades and exquisite glimmers, but it leads straight on to the supreme truth if the pursuit is not checked by the pleasing and engrossing experiences of the partial presentations. The Tantras integrate and affiliate experiences in systematic setting.

Art and religion with which the creativeness and harmony of life are associated cannot carry the same privilege; art cannot, by its very

nature of creative expression; religion to a degree can, when it foregoes the emotional graces and takes its cue from the higher planes of consciousness. It then overcomes the emotional delight and the ecstatic exaltation and proceeds to the wise passiveness whence it enjoys the supreme puissance of transcendent truth and calm equable delight. The religious attitude is dominant in the Tantras, inasmuch as there is an approach to Truth through the psychic opening, and not through intellectual dissertation and intellectual intuition. But this spiritual approach through psychic intuition does not necessarily confine our spiritual gaze to its ordinary limitations of a personal or cosmical feeling and relation; but carries it through finer spiritual perspectives to the realization of the absolute. This is the final experience. It ranges beyond the occult experiences, the delightful harmonies, the modulations of our being. There is evidently a difference in the nature and the character of these experiences and they belong to the different orders of existence. The psychic intuitions acquaint us with the spiritual potencies, and formations, enriching our being with exquisite experiences; but they cannot go beyond that. Spirituality here takes a different line from the quick flashes of being to its mysterious silence. It is the experience of the basic reality, and the realization is characterized not by any special emphasis on any side of our conscious life. Spirituality at this height is unique. It finds no expressions either in Art, or in Thought, or in Occult experience. Life-impulse cannot take formation in this height.

MAHENDRA NATH SIECAR

## THE BASES OF SPIRITUALITY

The following paragraphs are from the notes of **Swami Yatiswarananda's** class talks in Germany, given in December, 1933.—Ed.

### I

No man lives without love; only the objects of love differ with different persons. We either run after creatures and sense-pleasures, or after the Divine. This running after the Divine comprises all phases of spiritual life. The purificatory disciplines, as such, are not spiritual life; but steps leading to the beginning of spiritual life. In the very nature of things spiritual life means something higher than negative injunctions, something positive. But we can never really care for spiritual life from the very bottom of our heart, unless all such negative rules and prescriptions serving the purificatory stage have been strictly followed. Wherever there is lust and greed and desire for worldly things and worldly enjoyment, there real Divine Love can never come. You cannot serve two masters, as Christ said.

The Divine is in us and works in us, as the sun in the sky, as fire in the red-hot iron ball; and as soon as we come to feel this, as soon as we get a glimpse of our real nature, of the Indwelling Principle in all, all weakness and falsehood and wrong actions will disappear from our life. But first we must become, at least to some extent, conscious of our true nature, and allow the Divine to purify our impure, limited mind and body. That is why a clear conception of Truth and Reality is so

very necessary for the beginner—whether he happens to be a Bhakta, or a Jnani, or one following the path of analysis and psychic control.

Never lose sight of the fact that the purificatory stage and disciplines are but phases leading to spiritual life; but they are not spiritual life, and that true spiritual life is not a negation, but the greatest and most fearless affirmation possible, *i.e.*, the affirmation of our very Self, not subject to any limiting adjuncts, not subject to sin or weakness or ignorance, not bound to anything, not fettered by anything, devoid of all forms of desires and wants, eternally free, eternally unlimited by impurity and all the pairs of opposites, and eternally full of the highest Bliss and Knowledge. 'I am He' is the greatest affirmation of Truth ever taught and ever realized in the world of man.

### II

In the purificatory stage Brahmacharya is absolutely necessary, and if the world today comes to recognize again the great value of Brahmacharya, there is still some hope of its recovery. Impurity, immorality, sex-indulgence, are eternally inseparable from brutishness, and these can never be outgrown, unless Brahmacharya is once more given its real place in the life of men and nations. What is natural in the man of self-realization, must needs be acquired by training in the life of the aspirant approaching the threshold of spiritual life.

All the Great Ones exist eternally, not on the physical, but on the

mental plane. There are visions and visions, and the test of them is whether there is any real transformation of our whole being, or whether we remain what we were before the vision. If a man does not lead a life of perfect chastity, he has certainly not seen the Divine.

All the Great Ones have the personal and the impersonal aspect, because they all represent both aspects in one person.

A vision of the right sort we can have only when we possess a very strong, healthy, chaste, pure body that is really able to stand all the reactions consequent upon such a vision, and when we possess a wholly purified and dispassionate mind and true spiritual insight that makes us feel we are neither the body nor the mind, nor man or woman, but spiritual entities distinct from all these.

Our body and mind and senses must be perfectly attuned to each other, so that even the body reflects the glory of the soul.

### III

True vision, even with form, always contains the spiritual element and reflects the glory of Brahman. And, remember, it is always better to be a dualist with realization, than a monist without realization. True vision with form is a step leading you to higher and higher stages of spirituality, but theoretical monism without any realization just leaves you nowhere. The Absolute is very far off, and what we are concerned with in our present stage is qualified non-dualism at the best.

If all senses are stilled and controlled, in perfect condition, and if the mind, too, is in that state, then

alone true vision becomes possible, not otherwise. There is a very marked difference between the hallucination of an overheated brain or body and that state of true vision. Always the test is whether we attain more and more purity and greater and greater dispassion, holiness, and concentration.

### IV

When by strictly following the rules of Yama (restraint) and Niyama (observances) mind and body have become fit, then only will Japa and meditation become efficacious. Persons who do not wish to follow the prescriptions of Yama and Niyama, should give up all attempts at spiritual life. Their time has not yet come.

There is a test whether our body and mind are becoming fit for spiritual practice, whether the mental and physical purity is all right; and it is this: True disgust for one's own body and intercourse with other persons.

Pratyahara is the drawing in of the organs by giving up their respective objects and taking the form of the mind-stuff, as it were. The senses are drawn away from their objects, and the one thought on which we have decided to dwell, alone exists.

Dharana is holding the mind on to some particular object. And then this Dharana develops into Dhyana, which is an unbroken and steady flow of knowledge in the direction of that object. As soon as this Dhyana becomes really steady the state of Samadhi is reached.

All these are but the preparation for spiritual life. Ethical culture, breathing, posture, and Pratyahara

are but helps to real concentration and meditation which begin with Dharana.

Japa must be performed even during our work, whatever we do. Go on repeating the Holy Name of your Ishta, or your Mantra, but when you sit for meditation, you should do it in a more concentrated and a more intense way.

A greater portion of our mind must be awakened, must be made conscious, must be brought under control. When we sit for meditation we should try to see that the under-current in our mind and the upper-current, which are divided in ordinary life, are in tune, flow along the same line, are busy with the same thought.

To the extent we are able to love the Divine and feel an interest in the Divine, to that extent spiritual practice becomes more and more steady and successful. And this interest can be created. Divine love can be created.

## V

During the period of your Sadhana you should reduce the quantity of your food. The physical aspect has to be stressed in the beginner, as the body must be strong enough to stand the tremendous strain of concentration and the reaction which always comes in the beginning. Concentration always brings about a tremendous reaction in the untrained mind and body. The aim of Vedanta is to melt away this personality in the Universal Consciousness that finally, in its turn, melts away in the Absolute, the One without a second. Cosmic Consciousness is concerned with the One in the many, Absolute Consciousness with the One without

a second. These two states are not one and the same.

## VI

Good nerves are absolutely necessary for spiritual life. Both good nerves and the storing up of energy are the condition for success. There are so many storms on the path, of which you have no inkling up to now.

Never show your affection for another person outwardly, because then the mind comes down to the lower centres very easily. In spiritual life Brahmacharya must be kept on all accounts. One may have feelings and emotions, but all these should be kept under pressure and never be given outward expression.

If the present-day world comes to recognize again the great value of Brahmacharya, there is still some hope of its recovering. And it is our task not only to be pure ourselves, but to attain to such a high state of purity that others too in our presence feel pure and begin to think pure thoughts.

We should think of others as souls, never as men or women, never in terms of relations of sex. We must overhaul our whole thought-structure. Dig up the foundations, build new ones and only after having done so begin to raise the new structure.

## VII

Every aspirant should carefully study his own mind when left to himself. He should find out who are the persons with whom the mind is busy, what are the desires and tendencies of his mind when there are no outward stimuli. Smuggle in the Divine in some way or other, when the mind is trying to deceive you, as it always does.



The mind is to be watched constantly. When we find that it is careless in small daily things, it is sure to be careless in meditation and the other practices as well. That alone which conforms to the higher standard of life is beneficial and is to be done by you.

Careless thinkers cannot be but careless in their meditations. We do not get a new mind when we sit for meditation. No use living in a clean room, with a dirty mind.

Very good days for meditation on which we should have some extra meditation are the new-moon day, the eighth day before the full moon, and the full-moon day.

### VIII

In Karmayoga two points must be stressed. The work of the Karmayogin must be entirely disinterested, it must be systematic and steady. There must be no idea of self or of the fruits of his work in anything he does, and it must be done only for others.

### IX

Pilgrimage is the lowest form of spiritual practice. First comes meditation on the Truth, then dwelling on the higher ideals spoken of in the scriptures, and next dwelling on the Mantra, and then the lowest, pilgrimage.

‘The wandering monk and the running stream gather no moss.’

‘Without caring for pleasure and misery, without caring for gain or loss, fight this battle of life. Thus you will not commit any sin.’

‘Make Me the centre of your life. Surrender yourself to Me. Then you will attain grace.’

We must shift the centre of our interest—not only the physical nerve-centre in the body. We are trustees of the Lord. We should cease to be egocentric and try to fix our whole mind on Him. If we have to choose between extensivity and intensity, we must always choose intensity.

‘Those who speak of non-dualism and busy themselves only with the affairs of the world, lose this world and the next. Such people have to be always avoided like the outcast.’

‘Lord, when I have this body-consciousness, I look upon Thee as my Master and I am Thy servant. When I think myself to be a soul endowed with a mind, I feel I am Thy part and Thou art the Whole. And when I feel that I am the spirit distinct from the body and mind, I am one with Thee.’ This is the prayer of Mahavira (Hanuman).

### X

Our progress is always to be judged by our purity and non-attachment, by our introspection and discrimination, by our peace and selflessness. The test is whether we feel purer and purer and become less attached, whether the trend of the mind is away from all sense-objects and manifestation, becoming higher and higher. The test is whether we are slowly becoming able to stand on our own feet spiritually when we pass through moral and spiritual tempests which all striving brings. We have to colour our whole mind with the Divine and centre all our feelings and endeavours on It alone.

It is the great task of the devotee to increase the capacity for noble thought, but this noble thought must

not be given any outward expression in the beginner. Drive it deep into your mind, for then it gets tremendous power. You see when an elephant gets into a small pond, the whole water is disturbed and begins to overflow the banks. But when it gets into the sea, there is no change at all.

Maya's net is spread everywhere, and somehow we are always caught in it. We are able to make progress if we succeed in throwing aside all the stumbling blocks that lie in our way in the form of 'Woman and Gold' and undauntedly to forge ahead. 'Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.' We should go farther and farther without looking back, without caring for the small, petty, transient things of phenomenal life, without giving in to our desires and impulses, for then alone can we gain true freedom.

## XI

The moment you want to go in, bolt the door. The moment you want to come out, open the bolts. This is the goal to be attained. We must come to have perfect control of our own moods, and not be the slaves of them. Instead of just looking at the face of the Lord, saying, 'O Lord, how beautiful is Thy nose, how wonderful are Thy eyes,' lead a higher life, lead a life of consecration, of purity, of freedom from desires and impulses, of continence. Become moral. Do the will of the Lord. No use talking endlessly of the beauties and marvels of creation and worlds and the universe, because the Lord is infinitely greater than His so-called creation which only seems great to us.

We must rise to a plane which is beyond all desires and impulses, above the good ones and the bad ones. For from the good emotion to the bad emotion is but a very short way. Never should there be any uncontrolled experience of love. Never allow love to be expressed, or to seek expression, on the physical plane. Avoid any kind of emotionalism if you want to lead a spiritual life. Keep your emotions under control and learn to direct them into the right channels.

One should never feel shy of facing the Reality, however grim it may be.

Especially people who have some good and pure tendencies, some higher aspirations after a spiritual life, should be particularly careful and never give in to any form of lower desires for enjoyment, never give them any expression on the physical plane. They should avoid externalizing their desires and wishes more than anybody else, because they carry in them the germ for higher things. With great care separate the old thoughts, eliminate them, see that they can no longer gain ascendancy over you. When we water the tree, the weeds become very strong too, but the weeds will have to be rooted out.

## XII

'Thou art woman, Thou art man, Thou art boy, Thou art girl. Thou art born everywhere.'

'He is neither woman nor man, nor neuter.'

'He is associated with various bodies and is spoken of as having the sex of that body.'

Very strongly and decidedly strike at the roots of all sex ideas. Only when we think of the sexless, we can rise above the sex idea. All sex is of the body, not of the soul, and the best way to conquer lust and bodily passions is to think of ourselves as spiritual entities. Vedantic teachers go to the very root of the matter; others only take us to some half-way house, without really solving this most important problem.

Sankaracharya says, 'Truth is neither feminine, nor masculine, nor neuter. It is beyond all differentiation.'

Certain imaginations help us very much. Think of yourself as a Divine spark that is associated with the body. Having a fixed centre of consciousness in one of the higher centres is the only remedy against all lust and sex-troubles and infatuation for a man or a woman.

It is very necessary for us to think of others as absolutely devoid of and beyond sex, and of ourselves as absolutely devoid of and beyond sex too. Associate the idea of Brahman both with the object and with the subject. Salutation to the sexless Self that is within, salutation to the sexless Self that is without. Give the same strong suggestion to both again and again. These Vedantic injections must be very strong and real.

### XIII

Imagine very vividly that only one undivided mass of Divine Effulgence exists everywhere. Dissolve everything else into that till nothing else exists anywhere. Sometimes for meditation merge the subject and the object in the infinite and limitless Ocean of Light.

If you really care for Jnana or wish to dwell on the Impersonal aspect, you will have to withdraw the mind completely from the lower centres, and fix it firmly in the higher centres of the head, because the highest part of the body is the seat of the Paramatman. There alone can the individual be merged into the Universal. There alone full illumination and transmutation are possible.

And there is one very important point to note in our striving. When we judge ourselves, we should always judge ourselves from our weakest point, never from our strongest. The strength of a chain consists wholly in that of its weakest link, not in that of its strongest link. And we can only know where we really stand by testing the weakest link of the chain in ourselves, not by overlooking it and complacently dwelling on the stronger links.

Raising one's consciousness really means giving the brain-centre alone the work and guidance, and never to any of the lower centres in the body which are connected with it. It means forgetting the body and its impulses and coming in touch with subtler and higher currents.

The flow of the vital fluid should be upward too, never downward. All gross and physical manifestations of the vital fluid have to be avoided by the earnest aspirant, even if now and then such a thought arises in his mind, even if now and then the centre of his consciousness shows a tendency to go down. Our task is to control the centres and to learn to switch off the current at the original power-station. Try to control the different centres from the power-station, from where it can be

easily and naturally done. If you do this, there will be just enough nervous current to flow through the entire system to keep it in a fit and healthy condition, but not more than

that. The downward flow of all the current that is not absolutely necessary for that will then be completely stopped.

SWAMI, YATISWARANANDA

## THE GREAT PURPOSE OF HUMAN LIFE

The following is the second chapter of a forthcoming book entitled *The Right Direction of Real Progress* translated into English by **Chunilal V. Mody, B.A. (Hons.)**, Bombay, and comprising the sermons of Acharyadev Srimad Vijayaramachandrasurisvarji.—Ed.

HUMAN life holds the highest place in the scale of existence. It is the fruit of merit accumulated in past lives. All the different thinkers of the world have accepted and proclaimed in no uncertain terms the value and greatness of this human life. It is this life only which affords the scope for perfecting the powers of the soul to its supreme status by liberating it from the bondage of Karma. The failure to achieve this supreme end of human existence would be our greatest misfortune and a reproach on our capacity to apprehend and evaluate its true worth. It is not desirable, that the life which has been so much eulogised by the great seers of the world, should run to waste. Our object is to consider how best we can achieve its aim.

Human life, which is endowed with such excellent faculties, has a great purpose to fulfil. This life is not meant to be dissipated in drinking and eating and in the enjoyment of pleasures. If we ruin this precious life in the gratification of the objects

of the senses, it is all the same whether we had it or not. Death is the law of all life. All creatures are subject to the all-pervading majesty of death. Even animals and birds take birth, live for a certain time and then die. Will it not be insulting to our intelligence, if human life were to share the same fate?

It is a matter worth considering that the duties of man, and not of animals and celestial beings, are talked of everywhere in the world. The greatest teachers and real benefactors of the world admonish that the activities of man should be different from those that engage his attention today. You will, perhaps, be astonished at what I say; for you are so much engrossed in the worthless objects of the world, that you have no leisure to think of the things beyond that narrow compass. If the activities which are being pursued represented the highest endeavour of man, the great teachers of the world would not have praised human life so much. It is thus obvious that altogether different functions should characterize a man to make him worthy of a higher rank. A real man will not do a single act without forethought. The motto of human life should be: My deeds and activities should harm nobody. Noble is he who helps others. If a person cannot render service, he should at least

refrain from doing disservice. He who causes pain to others for the sake of his own happiness, forfeits the right to be called a man. Man's claim to a higher order is based on service. Man is endowed with such faculties and resources that he can be superbly useful to others. However, if such a man, becomes thoughtless, he will fall into the lowest depths of degradation and will even outdo an animal in wickedness, thus causing incredible harm to himself as well as to others.

The essential need is, therefore, to know what things make for the unfoldment of the sublime grandeur of human life. The great seers have *inter alia* indicated the acquisition of the following three virtues as means to this end. These three virtues are: (1) Morality, (2) Dread of Sin, and (3) Control of senses. Morality constitutes the cornerstone of the greatness of human life; dread of sin begets strength to cleave to morality; control of the senses saves from sinfulness. Purity of mind is, however, an essential pre-condition for control of the senses. The three virtues indicated here are inter-dependent and inseparable. If these three virtues become the very condition of life, the latter will become ennobling and worthy of adoration and reverence.

The guidance of wise religious teachers will alone help you to understand what is morality. Morality is the foundation of life. A man in whose texture of life morality is interwoven is above fraud and deceit. There is in morality a power which will not allow a man to swerve from his allegiance to the path of righteousness, whatever be his condition in the present. Morality circumscribes life

to the right path. Morality thus should be an instrument for securing good of one's own self and of others. It should not be abused to subserve self-interest or to work as a weapon for wronging others. None can foretell when a man who uses morality as a mask for securing his selfish purpose, will slip from that path. A really moral man should see that he does not injure anybody. Morality postulates frank-hearted action. It connotes unity of word, deed, and thought. It will not brook disharmony between thought and deed. What lies in the heart should only issue out in words but with the desire to do good, and the action should be moulded accordingly with due regard to one's own good as well as to that of others.

For remaining steadfast to such morality, one should have dread of sin and be ready to renounce everything for the sake of avoiding sin. If, however, one lacks the strength for complete renunciation, one should try to carry it out to the utmost limit of one's capacity. Anyhow, the desire to forsake sin should be uppermost in the heart. A man who fears sin will be wary and will have great compunction before committing immorality. Fear of sin should permeate the whole being. A man who observes morality will surely recoil from sin. If a man fears sin as he does a serpent, will *himsa*, falsehood, stealth, *unchastity* and covetousness increase or decrease in life? Our life is so much degraded that falsehood has become a common trait in trivial matters and stealth is committed not infrequently, especially when substantial gains are concerned. This is so because fear of sin has vanished. The great seers have

ordained in the scriptures that we should suffer ourselves but should not cause pain to others. Never dream that our soul will get peace by causing inconvenience to others. Men are afraid of serpents and thorns but not of sin. If a thorn enters the foot, it is drawn out by a sharper needle and after that blood is pressed out by hand and if necessary by a harder weapon. Why so? Why is the thorn not allowed to stay in the foot? Because you know that if the thorn remains there, it will affect the whole system and take life. If the body is thus afflicted with a slight ailment, the help of a doctor is at once requisitioned. How much do we care for the body! Is there as much care for avoiding sin? Which is more harmful? A serpent or sin? Sin is a thousand times more harmful than a serpent. If a serpent bites, it may infect poison and cause death and thus at the most destroy one life. But the sting of dreadful sins will harass the soul throughout many lives. Dread of sin is the root of virtue. A man having no dread of sin is never virtuous; while a man having dread of sin is never devoid of some virtues. A man who does not dread sin not only blights his own good but also that of others. Never think that a man who does not fear sin and misbehaves can do any real good to others. It is futile to expect any such thing from a man addicted to sin. Heaven be thanked, if such a man does not cause more harm.

While sin destroys morality, indulgence in sense-desires brings sin in life. Why is sin being committed? For satiating the pleasures of the sense-organs of sound, sight, taste,

smell, and touch. The eye loves to see beautiful forms, the ear delights to hear melodious sound, the nose prefers good smell, the tongue longs for good tastes, and the sense of touch enjoys the feel of elegant and delicate things. It is the dependence on the senses that begets sin. It is the tongue which is the villain of the piece in the sense mechanism, and which feeds, fattens, and maddens other organs of sense. Its dominion bemuses reason in matters of drink and food. To feed the tongue, with what it wants, is a sure way of inciting other sense-organs to fury. The greater the licence allowed to the senses, the greater will be the proportion of sin in life. The mad rush of sense-organs after their desirable things will drive away dread of sin, which is the prop of morality. Once this prop is removed, the structure of morality will crumble. Do you think life can be happy by pandering to the desires of the senses? Once you become a slave of the senses, dread of sin will vanish. When dread of sin is gone, morality will be demolished, and when morality is extinct, man is degraded to a beast and even lower than that. He will then lose the powers of discerning good from bad, beneficial from injurious, for himself and for others. What else is left behind when once the faculty of discernment is lost? In short, our subjection to the senses is the root cause of all sinfulness.

Purity of mind is the condition precedent for control of the senses. It is said:—

‘मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः’

An uncontrolled mind is the cause of bondage while the controlled mind

is the cause of liberation. A man who allows himself to be dragged by the desires of the mind, commits sin and injures his soul. He who gains control over the mind and directs it according to the teachings of the Omniscients achieves his own good as well as that of others.

The necessity for controlling the mind is self-evident. When a man is able to control a more powerful and ferocious animal like a lion, it should be easy enough for him to control his mind. Like a lion-tamer, we have to become adepts in the art of controlling the mind. Mind is not to be coaxed and cajoled but to be tamed to obey our wishes. We have to give the mind what we want and not what it wants. To gain control over the mind, it is necessary to disentangle it from covetousness. To weigh good and bad desires is the way to win over the mind. Bad desires should be extirpated and good desires should be worked for. Not only the sages but also worldly men must needs control the mind, if they desire happiness. Loss of control will mean misery for man despite his worldly possessions. What is needed is that a man should by all means suppress bad desires and train the mind to entertain good desires.

The seers, who have valued human life so much, have not spared efforts in pointing out various methods of controlling the mind. There is the story of a king and a nobleman's son, which best illustrates how to control the mind. On this occasion, I shall recount the said story succinctly for your edification.

There was once a king who was a great devotee of true saints. He used to speak highly of the saints who are free from the contact of the vices of

*himsa*, falsehood, stealth, unchastity, and worldly possessions, and who help others to taste the sweetness of renunciation. He used to say, 'Glory be to these saints. They alone are worthy of respect, reverence, and worship. They are guiding innumerable souls to the right path of religion.' He used to talk daily in this strain in his court.

The son of a nobleman of that state, who was beguiling his life in pleasures, did not like these talks of the king. One day he stood up in the court and said to the king, 'You are our lord and therefore you can speak as you please. None can contradict you. But I say, it is entirely wrong to believe that the mind can be controlled. It is impossible to concentrate the mind which is fickle and changing every moment like a weather-cock.'

The king replied, 'Sages are those who know the truth of things, are able to control their minds.'

The king tried much to persuade the nobleman's son, but in vain. He, thereupon, devised a plan to teach him a lesson in this regard.

The king asked one of his trusted servants to develop close friendship with that nobleman's son. When the bond of affection between both grew very strong, the king gave that servant a ring engraved with his name and said, 'Put this ring amongst the ornaments of that nobleman's son without his knowing it.' The trusted servant carried out his master's orders faithfully.

The king, thereafter, proclaimed through a crier, 'A ring engraved with my name is lost. He who has got it should return it at once. He who disregards this order and is found to possess it will be beheaded.'

The king's servants then decided for the general search of the city, and commenced it with the house of that nobleman. The ring was found from amongst the box of ornaments of the nobleman's son. The king's servants said, 'What is this?' The son of the nobleman was dumbfounded. He tried to remonstrate but nobody would hear him and he was arrested.

The king's servant who had imposed himself as a friend then approached the nobleman's son. The latter asked him to persuade the king by entreaties. The friend replied, 'I will persuade the king for any punishment short of capital punishment.' The nobleman's son replied, 'That would be much.' The king said, 'The nobleman's son should take a holeless bowl brimful with oil, should pass the whole town with that bowl, and bring it to the court without shedding a drop of oil from it. If he does this, he would be released; otherwise he would be beheaded.'

The nobleman's son even agreed to that condition for saving his life.

On the day of the nobleman's son's ordeal, the whole city was embellished with the trappings of mirth by the order of the king. All around the city, there were such entertainments of song, dance, frolic, mirth, merriment, and lovely sights, as would make it difficult even for a saint to control his mind. Amidst such distracting temptations, the nobleman's son without turning his eyes or ears anywhere and focussing his attention on the bowl brought it intact as it was before the court.

The king asked, 'What did you see in the city? How was it that your mind remained so much subservient to your will?'

He said, 'The mind had to be controlled anyhow. I knew that a great calamity would befall me, if I allowed my mind to be distracted. I did not allow it to be enticed through fear of death and with the hope of saving my life.'

The king said, 'When fear of one death can bring control of the mind amidst so many temptations of sensual attractions, could you not believe that the minds of wise people who foresee not one death but an endless chain of deaths, cannot be entangled in worldly matters?'

The nobleman's son understood the reality of the things, became penitent and respectfully said, 'Your sense of doing good to others is marvellous. If you had not brought me to my senses by this tact, I would not have believed any scriptures or religious teachers, despite their best efforts. You are my best benefactor in the world.'

The above illustration has a great moral for us. It teaches that the mind can be controlled and disciplined as one desires. However, a few noble souls, who aim at the spiritual progression of the soul, control their minds according to the precepts of religion and religious teachers. The generality of mankind control their minds as it suits the material purposes of life. Not that man does not value the need for controlling the mind at all. If everybody insisted on self-willed action, worldly intercourse would come to a standstill. The entire organization of society would get out of gear, if everyone followed the immature promptings of his mind. Where will a man act according to his fancies? Only in matters which do not touch his self-interest. But not at home, in the market, or in



business. Nor in matters which are considered as necessary and beneficial for life. However, a mania haunts people now-a-days that they might or might not do certain things, as it pleases them or suits their discretion. None can dictate to them. But despite such tall talks, in all spheres of life, their will does not count and they have to obey others. They submit to the dictates of the masters who give them bread and of the states which give them protection without minding freedom of thought and freedom of action. They do sacrifice these precious rights, when more precious material ends are to be served. Disregarding such manifest experience, it is only in religion—religion which helps the progress of the soul, which opens the treasure house of all happiness, and which is the key to the realization of the sublime grandeur of life—that anybody and everybody claims freedom of speech and action and refuses to accept the precepts of religion and of religious teachers. In fact, religion is necessary for attaining the bliss of the soul and consequently it should command the highest reverence of man. But so long as a man is not convinced that religion is necessary for the uplift of his soul, he will remain indifferent to it. In all human affairs, a man uses his judgment, thinks and submits to the guidance of wise people. He accepts and respects as experts who are proficient in their own lines. He has faith in the guidance of experts in regard to matters which are deemed as useful and which earn him his livelihood. But it is only religion that most people resent. They chafe under its restraints and say that religion is a matter of the soul and consequently

the soul may act according to its own sweet will. I ask them, 'Is your soul omniscient or little-knowing?' Everybody will have to admit that his soul in the present is not all-knowing but is little-knowing. Once this premise is granted, it follows that the best course for the little-knowing is to accept the path of the All-Knowing. There is a terrible risk in clinging to one's own ideas, so long as the soul is not all-knowing. Just as you accept the counsel of wise people in other matters, it is as much necessary in matters that affect the welfare of the soul to follow the precepts of the Omniscient Lord and of those that have consecrated their lives to His path. This course only will help you to achieve the real purpose of human life.

Verily, the greatness of human life lies in the progress of the soul. The development of the virtues of the soul should be the aim and endeavour of human life, so precious and so rare. But spiritual uplift would be possible, when life is based on the bed-rock of religion. Religion only will help you to acquire the virtues of morality, dread of sin, and control of senses and purity of mind. Caprices, wrong desires, and improper aspirations, have to be suppressed for attaining the spiritual well-being of the soul. The five organs of sense, which are engrossed in mundane pleasures, must be brought under control. And when that is done, it will be possible for you to escape from sin, to work out the inward beauty of life and to save yourself from causing injury to any creature by succumbing to falsehood, stealth, misconduct, and avarice. If you will live such highest kind of morality in life, you will be able to

enjoy exquisite peace even in this world. Not only that; in the next life you will get such congenial environment and materials as will help the evolution of your soul to perfection, in which state, it will be endowed with all bliss unshadowed by any

affliction of mental, physical, and worldly worries. Life has borne its fruition, if you but attain in this life a stage which will help in the final liberation of the soul.

CHUNILAL V. MODY

## **RAJA RAMMOHAN RAY: THE UNIVERSAL MAN**

The following paragraphs recalling to mind the greatness of the Raja, contributed by **Dr. S. K. Maitra, M.A., Ph.D.**, of Benares Hindu University, are based on his Presidential Address delivered in that University on the occasion of the hundred and seventh death anniversary of Rammohan Ray, celebrated on September 27, 1940.—Ed.

WHEN I think of Raja Rammohan Ray, I picture to myself a soul crying out for light—light not in one direction, or of one kind, but in all directions and of all kinds. He belonged to that type of universal mind which is not content with anything short of the whole. It has been the privilege of our country to produce such universal men. Our Vyasa, our Buddha, our Sankara, were such universal men—men who embodied in their own lives the whole culture of their age. But it would be doing injustice to these great men if we merely said that they represented in themselves the whole culture of their age; for they were much more than this: they were creators of a new culture. The world is what it is by reason of their creative activity. They are the creators of their age, and not merely its representatives.

In Rammohan Ray we find this creative activity at its highest. He was a pioneer in practically every field of his activity. He was the first to start an agitation for social reform, political reform, religious reform. He was one of the founders of Bengali prose and one of the first to start a Bengali newspaper. He was the first Indian to feel the need of Western education for the purpose of raising his countrymen from the position of absolute helplessness in which they found themselves at a time when the old culture had decayed and there was nothing to take its place. He was the first to visualize the conception of a Universal Religion which would be a true synthesis of all existing religions. He was the first among his countrymen in modern times to undertake a perilous journey to the forbidden land of Tibet to satisfy his insatiable thirst for knowledge. He was the first also to draw up a scheme for the establishment of a League of Nations on a basis much more real and stable than that on which the present League of Nations rests. He was the first in so many fields that the mere enumeration of the spheres in which he was a pioneer would fill a very large space. So much was he in advance

of his age that he was the creator of his age rather than a mere mouth-piece of it.

And yet Raja Rammohan Ray was a true representative of his age as well as of its culture. He represented in himself the three streams of culture that were flowing at that time—the Hindu, the Moslem, and the English. He was true to that great ancient culture of his land of which every true son of India is proud and justly proud, in a much more real sense than the avowed apostles of that culture in his time. Indeed, the whole of his programme of reform, whether in the social, religious, or political field, is inspired by the spirit of the ancient culture of his country. His work may thus be compared to that of the great men who ushered the Renaissance in the West. Just as these great men were creators of a new age by reviving the true spirit of the ancient Greek culture, so Rammohan could become the creator of a new era by resuscitating the true spirit of ancient Indian culture. It would not indeed be an untrue description of his work to say that he revived the true spirit of the culture of India which had almost been crushed by the mountainous heap of customs and usages that had grown round it in the course of centuries.

I sometimes wonder what Manu or Yajnavalkya would have done if they had been born in the present century. But of one thing I am sure: they would have proposed the abolition of many of the laws and customs of which they were the authors. They would have done this, simply because these laws and customs were not adapted to the spirit of the present age. A Manu or a

Yajnavalkya is, first and foremost, a living spirit, a creative personality. They cannot therefore remain content with a static permanence of the old, but must demand a re-thinking of all problems in the light of the new conditions of every age.

Rammohan would not have been a worthy descendant of Manu and Yajnavalkya if he had demanded anything less than this. We are too apt to forget this and unjustly blame Rammohan for not showing enough respect for ancient culture. If there is any charge which is absolutely without any foundation, it is this. Rammohan no doubt favoured the spread of Western education. He even went so far as to write to Lord Amherst, requesting him not to establish a Sanskrit College. But this was not because he had no regard for the culture of his land, but because he feared that the degenerate Pandits of his day would only perpetuate the hopeless type of instruction which was prevalent in the *pathshalas* of that time. There was also a genuine fear in his mind that if the British Government spent all the money that they had earmarked for education in founding a Sanskrit College, there would be nothing left for imparting education in Western science and Western culture.

I think the charge is so frivolous that it needs no refutation. Those who make it forget that if Rammohan had really no respect for the culture of his country, he would not have engaged in those controversies with the Christian missionaries, the object of which was to vindicate Indian culture against their unjust attacks. Indeed, the chief reason why Rammohan Ray was not a

*persona grata* with these Christian missionaries, in spite of his great reverence for the life and teachings of Christ, was that they felt that he wanted to thwart their efforts at proselytization.

In fact, Rammohan, notwithstanding his great enthusiasm for Western science and culture, was never oblivious of the fact that if his country was really to be great again, it could only be by remaining true to its own spirit. He wanted to receive the new light that was coming from the West, just as a healthy body would receive nourishment from all sources but would utilize it in building up its own tissue. It was only this way of receiving that found favour with Rammohan Ray and not the other way, which consisted in abject surrender of all one was and had.

It would be hazardous to speculate what Rammohan would have done if he had been born today. Well, one thing I am sure he would never have done. Steeped as he was in Moslem culture and much as he loved Hindu-Moslem unity, he would never have made an abject surrender of himself and his community for the sake of that unity. For he knew clearly one thing which, unfortunately, some of our present leaders have either forgotten or deliberately want to ignore, namely, that no unity is worth having, unless it is based upon mutual respect.

Rammohan was one of the greatest humanists that the world has ever produced. His many-sided activities and his breadth of vision were the direct result of his great humanism. As the Poet Tagore once said of him, 'Only a very few people in the whole world could, in that age, realize through the mind and spirit and

express in their lives the Unity of Man as Rammohan had done.' 'He realized that it was only when man regarded the external boundaries of his religion as more valuable than its infinite inner significance that man was jealously kept apart from man. He had envisaged in its entirety the truth of man, and therefore his service to his country became complexly many-sided, which never narrowed its path of welfare by following the line of least resistance and of immediate expediency.'

It was this humanism, this great desire of his to realize the Unity of Man, which led him to formulate a scheme for the establishment of a League of Nations long before anybody, either in the East or in the West even, dreamt of it. I quote below some extracts from Rammohan Ray's letter to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, written in 1831, as given in *The Modern Review* for October 1928:

'It is now generally admitted that not religion only but unbiassed common sense, as well as the accurate deductions of scientific research, lead to the conclusion that all mankind are one great family of which the numerous nations and tribes are only various branches. Hence enlightened men in all countries must feel a wish to encourage and facilitate human intercourse in every manner by removing as far as possible all impediments to it in order to promote the reciprocal advantage and enjoyment of the whole human race...

'I beg to observe that it appears to me the ends of constitutional government might be better attained by submitting every matter of political difference between two countries to a

congress composed of an equal number from the Parliament of each; the decision of the majority to be acquiesced in by both nations and the chairman to be chosen by each nation alternately for one year, and the place of meeting to be one year within the limits of one country and next within those of the other, such as at Dover and Calais for England and France. By such a congress all matters of difference, whether political or commercial, affecting the natives of any two civilized countries with constitutional governments, might be settled amicably and justly to the satisfaction of both and profound peace and friendly feelings

might be preserved between them from generation to generation.'

To sum up: Raja Rammohan Ray was a great humanist who was far in advance of his age. He knew that the only way in which a nation could be saved was by keeping its spirit alert. And the sign of an alert spirit was its power of receiving impressions from outside. But he knew also that if this power of receiving impressions was really worth anything, it should not end in mere reception, but should stimulate a proper reaction of the organism to it, leading to a more vigorous growth of the organism.

S. K. MAITRA

## CONSISTENCY IS THE BACKBONE OF CHARACTER

THE character of man is a curious blend of various elements. The animal, the human, and the divine tendencies are all to be found in the human being. They toss him into activities varying from the sublime to the ridiculous. Look at man, the animal! There are hundreds of situations in which he finds himself to be no master of himself; he is as helpless as the arrow in the hands of the archer, having no self-determining power whatsoever. Praise showered on him under such situations is meaningless; nor does blame serve any purpose. As a mere creature of circumstances he often drags on a wretched life. New and prosperous chapter in life begins for him only on the day he subjugates the animal in him and takes his stand on the human, striving for the divine.

Again, man, in his ignorance, is constantly dissipating his energy in various futile ways. It hardly ever occurs to him that his faculties are all let loose, each to wander in its own way. The result of it is patent. Worry, anxiety, and despondency on the one side grind him away; unhealthy competition, jealousy, and intolerance gnaw into him on the other. Purposeless attempts and aimless activities lead him not rarely into wilderness from which even to retrace the steps is hard. Clarity of thought is impossible when one has slipped into such a state. In short, all his faculties fly at a tangent—emotions, activities, and confused ideas drive him on, as a withered leaf, into different directions. This is the picture of man on the battlefield of life. His plans and purposes are foiled everywhere, and he is

hardly conscious that it is all due to his own nature failing him. It is therefore only common that seeing a gloomy picture everywhere he recoils as a pessimist or negative philosopher.

More or less this was the position of Arjuna on the eve of the great war of Kurukshetra in which he was to play a foremost part. He believed he was well equipped against all contingencies in life. And there was sufficient ground too for his presumption. Was there any other prince in those days, who had received an all-round training as Arjuna had done? He was the favourite of Drona, the preceptor. That the teacher was partial to the best of his disciples is nothing strange. None had travelled so extensively as Partha had done. He had come in contact with various climes, customs, and manners. The privilege of imbibing from various cultures and civilizations was given to him. Tradition has it that recognizing his prowess, the celestials vied with each other in bestowing on him divine weapons of various kinds. Siva, the God of gods, took delight in engaging him in an encounter. These were some of the notable incidents in Arjuna's life; as such it was but proper that he felt competent to make decision on vital issues in life. Arjuna fancied a new wisdom had dawned over him, and his arguments resulting from it are given in the latter part of the first chapter of the *Bhagavadgita*. He believed that what he chose to do was the best to avert a catastrophe.

But Sri Krishna's analysis of the situation is altogether different. Though involved in the turmoil, He is not a party to it. He is more a spectator than a player. The im-

partial witness alone cognizes the truth in all its nakedness. He sees in Arjuna what many others have failed to recognize. A chain is no stronger than what it is at the weakest link. A man also is no greater than the clarity of his understanding during a crisis. It is this point that Sri Krishna drives home into the mind of Arjuna: 'You have been mourning for them who should not be mourned for. Still you speak words of wisdom. The really wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead.'

The implication is that there is no consistency in Arjuna. His intellect contradicts the heart. His conduct does not corroborate his conviction. There is an unconscious civil war among his talents, one nullifying the other. The action of such a person leads him nowhere. He cuts at the root of his own personality. The most essential equipment in life is to harmonize the talents. Every power must be subordinated to a central purpose. If one has received training in everything, but has not learnt to co-ordinate the faculties, his efforts, however super-human they may be, come to naught. When the fibers are all properly twisted together, they form a rope strong enough to tie a mad elephant. Even so, when the talents are tuned to co-operate with one set of purpose, not merely is the purpose easily achieved, but also a great character is thereby built. To harmonize the faculties is the first step in Yoga. Arjuna had not learnt this rudiment till then. As such he had divided himself into more than one personality, and was paving the way for self-destruction.

Subtle and forcible are the laws that govern the moral and spiritual world. Those who take note of, and conform to, them evolve into divinity very quickly. Parallel to what Sri Krishna has pointed out as the basis of Yoga, Sri Ramakrishna says that mind and mouth have to be completely harmonized. The idea is that there should be no clash between what one thinks and speaks. It is this clash that kills the personality. The soil and the seed are two separate entities; but the more they unify, the better is the result in the form of a plant. Man's talents are not separate entities. They are various phases of the same personality. Disharmony among them leads to self-annihilation. In order to avoid this losing one's soul, Yoga has to be established among the talents that emanate from the head, heart, and hand. The Yogeswara advocates this first in his spiritual dissertation.

Some ceremonies are gone through as an atonement for the omission and commission of certain deeds. The Hindus, through a purificatory ceremony, and a section of the Christians, through confession, try to get their sins expiated. If the desire for reformation is genuine, these atonements have their value. But there are those who have lost the spirit of it, and merely cling fast to the form. They fancy that they can indulge in any action into which the lower nature prompts them, and then get themselves easily reconciled to moral purity through a mechanical ceremony. Holiness can never be bargained that way. This is a clear case of man turning a renegade, posing to be faithful all along. This kind of inconsistency will degrade

him all the more. In his attempt to hoodwink others he deludes himself, and puts some new obstruction in the way to his moral and spiritual progress. Not merely should there be harmony between mind and action, but also between the profession and the garb. If an unqualified man puts on the attire of a lawyer he will be simply laughed at. Holy garb should be an indication of a holy mind. Ravana tried to cheat Sita by covering his fowl self with a sacred garb. On the day he struck upon this plan death also took possession of him. Such is the wage of hypocrisy born of disharmony between mind and action.

Word is a great weapon. It can create as well as destroy. There are cases in which speeches have changed the history of nations. Like a magic wand, words have driven people to a completely altered course in life. The utterances of sages have had power to make or mar others. Wherefrom did words receive so much power? In all such cases there was harmony between thought and word. Great characters were built only through consistency in thought, word, and deed. Irrespective of the creed to which one subscribes, if one speaks only what is within one's mind and faithfully acts up to it, one is bound to become a great character. Word becomes all powerful when used by a mighty mind. A worldling may say that God is all in all, while he feels at heart that the world is his all in all. Such a divided mind derives no benefit from the Supreme Source. The devotee on the other hand is no traitor to himself. His thought, word, and deed express only one thing—dependence on God. So

whatever he prays for is more than answered.

Everything great, useful, and conducive to the growth of the personality accrue from the co-ordination of faculties. Richness of life consists of the innumerable patterns into which human faculties can be designed. But these incalculable varieties do not mean that the talents are in themselves too many. In fact they can be all brought under three comprehensive headings—the powers to act, to feel, and to know. Through these aspects the human potentiality unfolds itself. Discord among them is the cause of a good deal of human ailment. Mental breakdown, exhaustion, nervousness, and physical debility can all be traced to clash or lack of co-ordination among these

faculties. When the conflict is carried to its extreme, it shatters the sensory and motor nerves permanently. Lunacy is its result. But man aims at the possession of a healthy body and mind. Divinity manifests only through such instruments. For that a clear understanding of the truth, an indomitable will to consistently put it into practice, and a finely tempered feeling to lubricate, are required. These talents should unfold each supplementing the others. To create consistency among them is to build character which is another word for Yoga. Harmony among thought, word, deed, and feeling is the first step in Yoga. Sri Krishna points out its importance to Arjuna and through him to humanity.

SWAMI CHIDBHAVANANDA

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**The Rhythm of Living:** By SIR ALBION BANERJI. PUBLISHED BY MESSRS. RIDER & Co., PATERNOSTER HOUSE, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C. 4. PAGES 157. PRICE 6SH.

In this attractive volume the author has set forth lucidly the ways and means for attaining a 'Fuller life', according to Hindu Philosophy. Man, with his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, can achieve happiness only by the exercise of all his creative faculties. But when all the creative faculties are called into play, the necessity of effecting a harmony between them becomes supreme. Mind, according to the author, is the one competent agent to effect that harmony. Verily, 'it is the mind that makes men giants or makes them dwarfs.' Sir Albion, as a true Indian, believes sincerely in the 'Realm of the Spirit' and points out that the 'Supreme Ideal' of life can be achieved only by harnessing the mind in a direction that

will fulfil the exhortation of our ancient seers: 'Know Thyself'.

In two chapters the writer of the book emphasizes the importance of a well-tuned and perfect body. He draws attention of the reader to some fundamental rules of health and hygiene, most important to the Hindu but most neglected by the Westerner in daily life. Sir Albion rightly makes use of the thorough and intelligent study he had made of the social conditions of the countries of the West in the present work. This, in fact, constitutes an illuminating characteristic of the book. His conclusion is that the materialistic West has much to learn from India in matters spiritual before it can tune up life into a rhythm.

The book, it appears, is intended for the Western reader, and the author deserves to be rewarded by his gratitude for the facile renderings of the main trends of Indian thought. The Indian reader also stands



to profit by the readings the author has given of the master minds of the West, like Dr. Martenau. The success of the book lies in the way it suggests, quite in consonance with Hindu thought, a synthesis of the three different functions of life, physical, mental, and spiritual, which alone can usher into life the much needed rhythm and harmony.

**Sandhya Meditations: AT THE CHRISTUKULA ASHRAM.** By C. F. ANDREWS. PUBLISHED BY G. A. NATESAN & Co., MADRAS, PAGES xiv+176. PRICE RE. 1.

'I have not known a better man or a better Christian than C. F. Andrews'; 'That he loved India was the least part of his greatness. He was truly great because he loved humanity';—these genuine tributes of two of the greatest living sons of India, Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore, are sufficient to impress even upon the minds of those who have not known much of his activities the true greatness of this untiring champion of the oppressed and the miserable. A series of twenty-five meditations which he gave at Sandhya time in the Christukula Ashrama at Tirupattur form the main body of the book under notice. They bear ample testimony to the exalted spiritual level this genuine follower of Jesus Christ had achieved in his thoughts and deeds. Besides being an inspiring document to all who are interested in the 'Christian way of life' it offers valuable lessons and stories even to others who go through its pages, to whatever religion they may belong. We congratulate G. A. Natesan & Co., upon this timely publication.

**India's Sacred Shrines and Cities:** PUBLISHED BY MESSRS. G. A. NATESAN & Co., MADRAS. PAGES xiv+445. PRINTED ON ART PAPER, PRICE RS. 3.

In the West cities have developed from trade centres. But in ancient India they have often grown round great temples which have also become centres of culture and pilgrimage. Perhaps no other people take so much interest in pilgrimage as we. This is evident from the fact that our Puranas devote much space to the descriptions of holy places, and that they insist upon pilgrimage as a religious duty. In our own languages as well as in English

there are some books describing these pilgrim centres. But a modern handbook of the present type, giving historical and other allied informations connected with these holy places is, far from being a superfluity, supply a persistent need. G. A. Natesan & Co. has therefore done a very useful service by bringing out the above illustrated volume. Though it is not very comprehensive, it contains sufficient details to excite the interest of persons who may wish to visit those places. Besides the pleasure pilgrimages afford and the merit that may accrue from them, they have an educative value which it would be impossible to get fully if one is not previously acquainted with the nature and history of the places visited. The book under review is a good help in removing one's ignorance regarding those matters. The price of the book appears to be a bit high in view of the quite ordinary illustrations and get-up.

**Outlines of Hinduism:** By T. M. P. MAHADEVAN, M.A., Ph.D., PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY, PACHIAPPA'S COLLEGE, MADRAS. PAGES 128. PRICE NOT STATED.

Of all the handbooks on Hinduism recently published in English, both by foreigners and Indians, for the benefit of those who have no previous study on the subject, the above book appears to us to be one of the best. Some of them already existing before the publication of this volume may be somewhat elaborate on certain points or some others may have citations from Sanskrit Scriptures interlarding the pages (not to mention some written by interested persons with gross prejudice and poor understanding), but none of them is superior to this *Outlines of Hinduism* in brevity, perspicuity, faithfulness, attractiveness, intelligibility, and logical coherence. The seven chapter headings—'What is Hinduism?', 'Hindu Scriptures', 'Hindu Rituals', 'Hindu Ethics', 'Hindu Sadhana', and 'Hindu Philosophy'—cry out that no salient point is left out. The chapter on 'Hindu Ethics' is excellent, and all the chapters pre-eminently fulfill the needs of a text book for beginners. Throughout, the book is written with scientific penetration and clarity and exceptional fairness, without the pleading

tone of a propagandist or the dry criticism of the researcher who often has no faith in the content or spirit of the subject he treats of. We greatly recommend the book to the entire student population, and such others, whether in India or outside, who for the first time wish to acquaint themselves with the form and spirit of a great living religion. We also hope earnestly that it will be translated into the important spoken languages of India.

**The Twofold Path in The Gita: By**  
**Dr. T. M. P. MAHADEVAN, M.A.,**  
**Ph.D. PUBLISHED BY SWAMI NITYA-**  
**NANDA, PRESIDENT, GITAPRABODHA SAN-**  
**GAM, SRI SUKA ASHRAM, KALAHASTI.**  
 COPIES CAN BE HAD ON APPLICATION,  
 WITH TWO ANNAS POSTAL STAMPS EN-  
 CLOSED, TO SRI SATCHIDANANDA SANGHA  
 44, NAGAPPIER STREET, TRIPPLICANE POST,  
 MADRAS.

If the *Gita* is the milk of the Upanishad cow, it is quite legitimate to hold that the main doctrines of the former are embedded in the latter. Again if Sankara's exposition of the Upanishads is held to be rational and consistent, it would be impossible to

deny those virtues to his exposition of the *Gita* also. From a heterogeneous text like that of the *Gita* none can evolve a coherent system with the aid of etymology and syntax alone. Hence loosely hanging parts are to be subordinated somehow to the main doctrine and meanings consistent with the central teaching are to be read even where literalism would revolt against such freedom taken with the text. All constructive study of the *Gita* has to face this problem at one step or other; and leaving aside the anatomizing profane critics all others have done it; and Sankara has made the least use of this liberty. To dub it 'text-torturing' is not fair. Sankara, Ramanuja, Tilak, Aurobindo—all have in that sense made only 'doctrine-supporting' commentaries. In this brilliant brochure of 34 pages Dr. Mahadevan gives a beautiful elucidation of the view-point taken by Sankara in his immortal commentary on the *Gita*. We heartily congratulate the learned doctor on this attractive presentation of a time-old view of the *Gita* and recommend it to all students of the *Gita*, especially the potential critics of Sankara.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### IN MEMORIAM

**Claudina Wollberg**  
**Henry Fay Page**

With deepest regret, the Vedanta Society of Northern California at San Francisco, U.S.A., has apprised us of the passing away in recent months of two of its oldest members. The passing of the Lord's devotees always occasions sadness among those left behind; but in the deaths of Mrs. A. S. Wollberg and Mr. Henry F. Page, the Society suffered losses which are indeed irreparable. Their lives were radiant with the light of the spirit, and they both traced their connection with the Lord's work to the very earliest days of the Society.

Claudina Wollberg died on May 23, 1940, after a brief illness. She had been closely identified with the varying fortunes of the Vedanta Society in San

Francisco from the day of its founding during Swami Vivekananda's visit to San Francisco in 1900. She was one of the first contributor to the fund that defrayed the expenses of building the Hindu Temple, and she also gave generous help to Swami Trigunatita in the development of Shanti Ashrama. Few knew of her benefactions, however, for her modesty and self-effacement were extreme. By no word or sign did she ever give evidence of the important part she was playing in the consolidation of the first Vedanta centre on the Pacific Coast of the United States of America. She was concerned only with the personal realization of the truths of Vedanta, and in serving the Lord through the work of the Society.

It was her inestimable privilege to have met four of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. To them as well as to all the Swamis of the Belur Math who

were either assigned to work here or were on their way to or from their various centres throughout the United States, she with her devoted husband opened their home with the most gracious hospitality. For a short time Swami Turiyananda was their house guest; and it was he who gave her the Sanskrit name of *Prasūtī* (Mother). With the coming of Swami Trigunatita her efforts in the furtherance of the Vedānta cause increased. Despite her manifold household duties she gave hours of her time daily to help the infant Society to gain a secure footing. No task assigned to her was too great, no service too lowly for her who had dedicated her entire energy to the Lord and the establishment of His work.

She was deeply interested in the study of all religions, especially the Hindu religion as exemplified by Vedānta in all its phases. With the help of Sanskrit, gained in three years' study under Swami Trigunatita, she was able to delve deeply into the inner meanings of the Hindu Scriptures, and up to the time of her last illness a certain part of every day was devoted to their study. At the same time she was a devoted wife, a loving mother and a staunch friend, from whose lips no word of criticism or condemnation ever issued. Many are the friends who mourn her passing and who miss her warm-hearted interest and wise counsel in any and every emergency.

Even among the Lord's most ardent devotees, Claudina Wollberg's sweet and gentle nature was unique. Long years of meditation and spiritual discipline brought her many spiritual experiences; and there is no doubt that she had progressed far along the path of spiritual knowledge to which she had dedicated herself. Those who cherish her memory bid Godspeed to her bright spirit on its way to that lofty realm, the abode of Sri Rāmakrishna, to the attainment of which all her thoughts, studies, and energies were constantly and consciously directed. May she abide there with Him forever!

Henry Fay Page, for more than thirty-two years a devotee of Sri Rāmakrishna,

and a member of the monastery established in San Francisco by Swami Trigunatita, passed away on June 16, 1940. He had been ill for several months following a cerebral haemorrhage, and was confined to the hospital from the time of the stroke until his passing.

Mr. Page was born in Reading, Massachusetts, in February, 1871. His enlistment in the U.S. Army brought him to San Francisco; and while serving in the Army Hospital Corps he became a disciple of Swami Trigunatita. Upon the expiration of his enlistment in 1908 he entered the monastery at 2961 Webster Street, where he spent five years under the guidance and training of Swami Trigunatita. The need to earn a livelihood took him away from San Francisco in 1913, and for several years he lived an itinerant life, wandering across the United States and Europe.

Shortly after the death of Swami Trigunatita in 1915, Mr. Page returned to the monastery and at the request of the trustees of the Vedānta Society of San Francisco, he went to Concord, California, to act as care-taker of the property left there by Swami Trigunatita. The following year he returned again to San Francisco to take care of the Temple gardens, and remained there in the monastery until his final illness.

The fruits of long years of meditation and devotion to the Lord were clearly manifest in Mr. Page's life. Even those who knew him only slightly were impressed by his calm and even nature. No irritation or difficulty or misfortune ever upset his self-possession or affected his peaceful disposition. Though he was obliged to work hard for his living even in his old age, his mind was wholly withdrawn from the world and its preoccupations. So little did he think of his body that he never recognized as serious the physical difficulties which finally prostrated him. He was indeed one of the Lord's blessed devotees, for he found within himself that spiritual poise, that calm and peace for which every spiritual aspirant seeks.

Though death brought him release from a body rendered almost completely helpless by his illness, his passing brought a deep sense of loss to his fellow

Society members. While he lived among them his presence was an unending source of joy; and the memory of his life will always be an inspiration.

#### Activities of the Chicago Center, January to July 1940.

The Vivekananda-Vedanta Society of Chicago celebrated the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna by holding a banquet in the Hotel Maryland on Sunday, May 5th. Guest speakers were Swami Akhilananda of Providence, R.I., Dr. Paul Scherger of St. Paul's Evangelical Church of Chicago, and Prof. Charles Hartshorne of the University of Chicago. Swami Vishwananda, the leader of the Chicago center, acted as toastmaster.

Swami Akhilananda emphasized in his talk that the crying need in the world today is cultivation of the spirit of brotherhood among the different races and religions—the feeling of oneness with all human beings. To bring out the point more vividly the Swami related the incident from the life of Sri Ramakrishna, who, standing one day on the bank of the Ganges, saw two boatmen standing in their boat quarrelling and fighting. Finally, one of them began beating the other one mercilessly. Watching them, Sri Ramakrishna felt such deep compassion for the injured man that the marks of the blows appeared upon the Master's body. Swami Akhilananda also dwelt for some time upon the service that Swami Vivekananda rendered by preaching to the world the doctrine of the divinity of man.

Dr. Scherger, a scholarly student of Hindu scripture, maintained that the contribution of India in the domain of philosophy as embodied in the Vedas and Upanishads is unique.

The closing address was given by Swami Vishwananda, who said:

Year after year, we invite you in the name of one who brought a message from the unknown and the unknowable. In this age of realism we need idealism, but idealism based solidly on the testimony of human experience.

The audience was eagerly attentive and very appreciative.

Last January Swami Vishwananda was invited by the faculty of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago to deliver a lecture on the Harmony of Religions. On three occasions during the last season the Swami spoke before three different groups of students in the Northwestern University. In the department of Philosophy he chose the subject, Hindu Metaphysics; Comparative Religions, Spirit of Hinduism; Political Science, Cultural History of India.

#### Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda Birthday Celebrations in Mauritius.

For the first time in Mauritius the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were celebrated this year. The seventy-eighth birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, which came off first, was celebrated with worship and devotional music at the commodious house of Messrs. Canbady & Co., at Port Louis, where Swami Ghanananda was staying. The function was attended by nearly 500 people who were received with flowers and dispersed with sweets. Next came off the celebration of the 105th birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna, which was celebrated in the spacious hall of the Hindu Mahasabha at Port Louis, where readings from 'My Master' and extracts from the *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna* in English, Hindi, and Tamil, before an enthusiastic and devout gathering of nearly 800, from different parts of the Colony, formed an additional feature.

The Daridra Narayana Seva (feeding of the poor) at Port Louis, Rose-Belle, and Rose-Hill, was conducted on different dates to suit the convenience of the organizers and the public. Nearly 1000, 800, and 1300 mouths were sumptuously fed at the Kailasam Temple premises, Shivalaya compound, and Draupadiamma Temple buildings, which their Trustees kindly placed at the disposal of the organizers.

At Rose-Hill, besides the Daridra Narayana Seva, there was also a procession which was attended by nearly 1000 persons amongst whom were leading representatives from all over the Island. The celebrations were fittingly concluded with a religious meeting at Port Louis, which was attended by over a thousand people including about 150 ladies, and was presided

over by His Excellency the Acting Governor of Mauritius.

The function began with a Vedic prayer chanted in the ancient manner of the Aryans by the Swami. It was followed by a song on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda sung by children to the accompaniment of the Hindi Band. The Swami then welcomed His Excellency with a short speech. His Excellency then spoke feelingly of the great ideals and lofty principles embodied in the lives and teachings of the two great Teachers. He also expressed his deep appreciation of those principles and their great value for Mauritius with its several religions and races. Next followed the reading by Mr. P. Sreenivassen of a statement on the ideals and activities of the Movement in India and abroad, with a short note on the work in Mauritius. The Swami then spoke with much force and persuasion in English, Mr. H. Junkee in eloquent Hindi, and Mr. S. Mudaliar in fluent Tamil. A fine paper in French by Mon. Robert-Edward Hart, the well-known poet of Mauritius, was read by Dr. J. Seegobin in the unavoidable absence of the author. His Excellency in winding up the proceedings expressed his appreciation of the music of the Hindi Band and songs of the children, and observed that he was very happy to hear the speeches, especially that of the Swami and that of Mr. Junkee, and concluded with the words, 'The Swami's speech was very eloquent and very profound. I have not a word to add to it.'

**The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home,  
Calcutta.**

#### **Report for the Year 1939.**

The Home is situated in Dum Dum, a suburb of Calcutta. It provides for both free and paying students, studying in Colleges. The Home had been licensed by the Calcutta University as a non-collegiate hostel for the session 1939-1940. At the beginning of the year there were altogether 38 students, of whom 25 were free, 8 concession holders, and 5 paying. During the year 12 students left the Home and 18 new students were admitted. At the end of the year there were 44 students, of whom 25 were free, 9 concession holders, and 10 paying. The report under review states that 8 students sat for the Degree

Examination of whom 7 passed, three getting honours and one distinction. Seven students appeared for the Intermediate Examination of whom 6 passed, and 5 of them secured first class. One student passed the P.Sc., M.B. Examination and another passed the first M.B. Examination. The Home authorities did all they could for the all-sided development of the students who became inmates. The Library contained 1,400 general books and 1,160 text books which were helpful to the residents of the Home. The income and expenditure, as accounted at the end of the year, are Rs. 15,850-10-0 and Rs. 14,511-9-9 respectively. The observations in the Visitors' Diary confirm the excellence of the work done through the Home, especially in inspiring the students with high and noble ideals. The financial position of the Home is very unsatisfactory. Therefore the management appeals to the generous public for necessary funds.

**Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya,  
Coimbatore District.**

#### **Report for the Year 1939-1940.**

We have received from the Secretary of the above Institution the following summary account of the work done during the year: 'Ten years have passed since the Vidyalaya was started, and these ten years have been years of continuous progress and development in all directions. It has been the ideal of the Vidyalaya to impart a national education to our boys so that they may grow into bold and independent young men, pure in heart and strong in body, with high ideals of service to the country and the community. All the aspects of the Vidyalaya life have been made with this end in view. At present the Vidyalaya has a course up to S.S.L.C. One of the main characteristics of the Vidyalaya is the large share of work done by the boys themselves. There is an Executive Committee to look after the general work of the Vidyalaya and a Mess Committee to look after the boarding. Both are elected by boys themselves. The boys do their general duties in batches under elected captains. They also manage the stores on co-operative lines. Last year eight boys appeared for

the S.S.L.C. of whom seven were successful. The Vidyalaya also provides as far as possible for the further education of passed students. A scheme has been framed for giving stipends to the old boys for professional education. The stipend will be returnable within ten years of their beginning to earn. Of the boys who have gone out last year, some have taken up Tamil Pandits training, some Automobile Engineering, and some others Mechanical and Electrical Engineering.

The Wardha method of education has been introduced in the first form last year. Every day about two and a half hours were given for the teaching of the craft and about three hours for other subjects. This experiment has been found encouraging, and the children are now found to be brighter, more active, and enthusiastic. Particulars of this method and our experiences in this direction are published regularly in the *Vidyalaya*, our quarterly magazine. Hindi is taught in the first three forms. Eleven boys appeared for the Prathanic Examination. Of these seven passed. The quarterly Tamil Magazine entitled *Vidyalaya* is conducted with the following purposes: (1) To explain the educational ideals of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi, as they are practically worked out in the institution, for the knowledge of the parents and others, and (2) to establish contact with the old boys. During the year competitions in various subjects were held in the Vidyalaya which were open to all the High School students in Coimbatore District, and 162 students took part in the competition. The usual Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Memorial Rural Sports were held this year also. A summer school with the aim of giving practical effect to the Wardha method of education was run, and Sri Ariyanayalam and Srimathi Asha Devi were in charge of instruction. The course though short was useful in propagating the basic ideals of the new method of education. Audited accounts have been appended. The total income was Rs. 37,502-12-3 and the total expenditure was Rs. 22,882-0-10. The present needs of the Vidyalaya are a temple and a library which may cost about Rs. 25,000; a good workshop which may cost about Rs. 10,000; a gymnasium

which may cost about Rs. 5,000; and a guest house which may cost about Rs. 3,000. The institution is dependent upon public subscriptions. Its Secretaries therefore appeal to the public for their generous help.

#### The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram, Brindaban.

##### Report for the Year 1939.

The Sevashram, which completed the thirty-third year of its existence in 1939, owes its origin to the great inspiration left by Swami Vivekananda, who yoked the spiritual ideal of renunciation to the social ideal of serving humanity. The service of this nature at a sacred place like Brindaban, where every year thousands of devotees come from all parts of India, especially on the days of festivals, is inestimable. The report gives a brief account of the working of the Sevashram. The Indoor General Hospital had 32 beds. The total number of patients treated during the year was 289. Of these 254 were cured, 6 were relieved, 3 were discharged otherwise, 14 died, and 12 remained under treatment at the end of the year. The total number of surgical cases treated in the Indoor Hospital was 38. During the year under report 13,115 new cases, 21,080 repeated cases, and 554 surgical cases were treated in all, in the Outdoor Department. The facts in the report make it clear that the Institution is in need of solid financial support for its efficient and stable work. The total income for the reported year was Rs. 10,515-1-0 and the total expenditure was Rs. 9,193-14-3.

#### The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram (Charitable Hospital), Rangoon.

##### Report for the Year 1939.

It is highly gratifying to note that the Mission Sevashram at Rangoon is keeping a record of steady progress. In the year under report a maternity ward and a segregation ward were opened in two newly constructed buildings, with provision for 30 beds altogether. They were declared open by His Excellency the Governor of Burma and the Mayor of Rangoon respectively. In the Indoor Department, the total number of patients admitted during the year was 5,263, of which 4,117

were males, 1,152 females, and 94 children. The average period of stay in the Hospital in each case was 11 days. Some chronic cases were kept for months. The number of patients discharged was 4,981, the percentage of death being 5.2. At the Outdoor Department, the total number of cases attended was 3,03,691, including men, women and children, of which 1,99,100 cases were repeated and 1,04,591 cases were new. The average daily attendance in the Indoor and Outdoor departments were 148 and 832 respectively. The visitors' notes testify to the efficient working of the Hospital. In the year 1939, the Hospital's income was Rs. 1,14,429-3-0 and expenditure Rs. 1,03,701-2-8. The arrangement of facts in the Report is clear, and the appendix D may be helpful to a little extent in tracing out the causes of some of the diseases.

#### **The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, Hardwar.**

##### **Report for the Year 1939.**

Hardwar attracts crowds of pilgrims of all classes throughout the year. Hospitals to look to the needs of the poor and the helpless are almost nil in the neighbourhood. Therefore the value of an institution like the Sevashrama, which serves all people without any distinction of religion, caste, creed, and colour, is, indeed, very high. This is the thirty-ninth Annual Report. The following is a brief account of the activities of the Ashrama during the year under review: (1) Indoor Hospital Relief: The total number of patients treated in this department was 1,235 of whom 1,043 were cured, 140 relieved, 31 died, and 21 were under treatment at the close of the year. (2) Outdoor Dispensary Relief: The total number of patients treated was 25,078 of whom 10,533 were new and 14,545 were repeated cases. The daily average attendance of both Outdoor and Indoor departments was 102. In addition to the Hospital work the Ashrama conducted a Free Night School and maintained two libraries. The free Night School was started in 1913. The building for the school was a rented one. There were 80 students in the year, of whom 68 were on the roll and 12 boys under twelve years age were getting education in the

preparatory class. Among the adults 54 were Hindus and 14 Mahommedans. The School was managed by two Brahmacharis and two paid teachers. There were two libraries, one for the local public and another for the Indoor patients. The former contained 2,326 books at the end of the year. It received 24 magazines, 1 weekly, and 6 dailies which were supplied freely. The Ashrama celebrated the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. On these occasions poor feeding was a main item. The total income and expenditure at the close of the year, as shown in the audited statement of Receipts and Expenditure, were Rs. 35,787-6-9 and Rs. 28,013-8-0 respectively. Many eminent persons including His Excellency Sir Harry Haig and Her Excellency Lady Haig visited the institution and appreciated the standard of work. The Sevashrama appeals for an amount of Rs. 50,000 with a view to have buildings constructed for a general ward, laboratory, and the Night School, as well as accessories for the laboratory, modern sanitary arrangements, and 35 more beds in the Indoor Hospital.

#### **The Ramakrishna Sevashrama (Hospital), Shyamala Tal, Himalayas.**

##### **Report for the Year 1939.**

Nestled in the deep Himalayan forests, at a height of 4,944 feet above sea level and at a distance of 11 miles from the nearest Railway Station of Tanakpur, R.K.Rly., the Sevashrama has been the one and only source of medical relief, for the last 26 years, to the helpless sufferers over a range of 30 miles. During the year under review there were 6 beds in the Indoor Hospital. The number of patients treated in this section was 132, of these 71 were men, 32 women, and 29 children. Among these 97 patients were cured, 30 relieved, 3 left treatment, and 2 died. The total number of patients at the Outdoor Dispensary was 5,020, of which the new number was 3,446 and the repeated number was 1,574. Of the 5,152 patients in all 8 were Mahommedans, 12 Christians, and the rest Hindus.

Veterinary treatment: One of the distinctive features of the Sevashrama was the treatment given to dumb animals, such as cows, bullocks, buffaloes, etc., when they

suffered from wounds, worms, and foot-and-mouth diseases. The number of animals treated was 1,360. This kindness done to dumb animals may be tried in other places according to the needs and conditions. The total income and expenditure at the end of the year were Rs. 818-13-0 and Rs. 599-3-2½ respectively. The Ashrama now has a permanent fund of Rs. 3,000. The institution has served 40,818 patients in all during the course of its existence. Its meagre resources are not sufficient, as the scope of work is extending. The Ashrama needs an amount of Rs. 20,000 for a permanent fund to ensure its steady work.

Sri Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama,  
Contai (Midnapore).

#### Report for the Year 1939.

The following is a brief account of the activities of the Ashrama during the year under report. The Charitable Dispensary treated 20,641 patients in the year, of whom 5,770 were new and 14,871 were repeated. The daily average attendance was 66.6. Several roadside sufferers also were taken care of by the Ashrama. Cinchona pills were freely distributed to the inhabitants of village Paniparul and of Basantia Union Board. The Free Library contained 640 books and the total number of books issued was 3,127. The Free Reading Room received 14 journals in all. There were 4 students in the Free Homoeopathic Medical School of whom one passed the final H.M.B. Examination. Five small schools of various grades for boys and girls were managed by the Ashrama and the total strength of them was 348. There were 13 students in the two Students' Homes, four of these were provided with free boarding and lodging. In some of the neighbouring villages 24 lectures, including a few magic lantern lectures, were delivered. This had an average attendance of 240 persons. Daily Bhajana classes were conducted and the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Deva and Durga Puja were also celebrated. The income and expenditure of the Ashrama, according to the audited accounts, were Rs. 4,991-14-9 and Rs. 4,892-9-10½.

#### A Significant Extract

We reproduce below from *The Indian Social Reformer* of October 5, 1940, the

following passages occurring in an article entitled 'Racialism and World Order' contributed by Ralph T. Templin:

'....The greatest barrier to world democratic order and to permanent peace, at this very moment, is the inability of large sections of the public in every land to think in terms of racial equality. The suggestion for a European, or a "democratic", block of nations organized to preserve world order has met with sufficient rebuff from many quarters. But the argument against it has in the main relied upon the inevitable shifting of the basis of future war to race. I do not believe it is overdrawn to say that the racial war of the future, which must inevitably result from any policing of the world in white interests, will know such fury and devastation, as nations have never, even in 1940, known or experienced. I believe that that is true because I know what race is psychologically capable of. The utmost scourge that our present national factions can possibly produce, will probably prove but child's play beside the fury of an ultimate racial uprising against consolidated white supremacy. I accept that as the inevitable end of the way which Lindberg proposed and of the desire which seems to be behind all too much of the agitation for Federal Union.

The scheme for Federal Union in my mind constitutes a very great and supreme truth. The laying down of sovereignty is fundamental. But the laying down of supremacy and exploitation and the laying down of the superiorities and inequalities upon which these rest is far more fundamental. The federation movement's greatest embarrassment has been the personnel of its supporters. Lindberg found for a period a haven of security among these people—people who have everything to lose from the spread of the doctrine of racial equality. It is not improbable that Lindberg represented their case less diplomatically but more accurately than has been customary with propagandists of the movement for federal union. The answer to any world order which omits racial equality will be a new more virulent order of war and the certain extermination of the race itself which has refused equality. With all my regard for my own race, I



would say that, if that way is chosen, it may well be that in God's providence, the well-being of humanity will demand the end of a great race. We cannot store the "grapes of wrath" with a vintage of blood-red death and not expect that, in the winepress of God's wrath, the full penalty will be exacted....

I am interested the more, therefore, in advancing the thesis that the greatest barrier to any structure of world peace is racialism. It is this which stands in the road, right now, of a true democratic world order. I would be inclined to say that all our present futilities are deeply rooted in the susceptibilities which racialism (however unconscious) makes possible. My purpose is not to arouse racialism but to allay it in the only possible way, by pleading for the repentance which can set up its opposite—inter-racial spirit and accord. This is the most urgent step which mankind can take toward peace.... The point I am making is that this racial conceit, deeply rooted in the mentality of so many Europeans, is standing in the way of any realistic application of intelligence to the question of the peace structure after this war. Besides that, it is utterly without any further reason for being maintained. My purpose is to suggest to my own race that we can well afford to view these common problems of humanity in chastened mood, in a world in which our white race is now revealing superiority at only one point, self-destruction. I wish to suggest to members of other races that the same chastened thought and repentant spirit will become them also. For they have not been without their sin of inferiority, of cringing and fawning, of imitation and of false standards and ideals. Inferiority and servility inevitably produce their opposites, superiority and domination. The racial solution is not in answering arrogance with arrogance or hate with hate. It is in the mutual repentance which can draw races into an international fellowship. It is in Oxenham's

One great fellowship of love  
Around the whole wide earth.

I have said that racialism already exists as one of the greatest barriers in the road

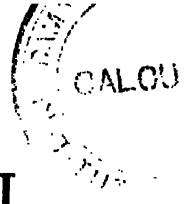
of progress towards permanent peace.... We have to admit that this racial conceit lies, like a disease, upon the hearts of the people of our race. I do not think there is much future for our race unless we can get rid of this fever of superiority and by breathing God's pure air again restore our race to the normalcy of the divine familyhood of earth. This is our great task which lies before every true Christian in the West.... Our common problem is to find a cure for the disease of racialism wherever it may be found and in whatever degree it may exist. So, therefore, I want to conclude with a reference to what I firmly believe is the only possible cure.

The way of religion and of God is the way of absolute equality with all people. People who scare up the biological bogey, should remember the fact that biological intermingling of the races has generally been on the level of the grossest inequality and exploitation. And, secondly, they should remember that, whereas physical intermingling has often been accompanied with the utmost inequality, equality itself does not necessarily imply physical relationship at all. My honest opinion is that the biological aspect of race is a scare which has been effectively used now for thousands of years to keep vast peoples "in their place", and that untouchability is only one of the world's oldest examples of it.

From the point of view of men who are deeply searching for the universal Truth which belongs to all genuine faith, the answer to racialism is identification. This is our faith which must be made known to all men.

We have been taught and have practised awareness of God, which was only individually experienced. As the result our faiths have not made us sufficiently sensitive to other people. I include myself because it is only within recent years that I have come to understand clearly my own unfolding experience of God-consciousness. It is now my firm belief that we become aware of God as we become aware of our fellow-men and identify ourselves with them in sacrificial self-giving. This, I now believe, is the great and significant gift of revelation through Christ.'

# THE VEDANTA KESARI



VOLUME XXVII



NUMBER 8

DECEMBER, 1940.

---

## THE HYMN OF VICTORY

These verses are culled and arranged from an authoritative devotional scripture associated with the name of the great sage Narada and designated as *Naradapancharatra*. They illustrate in a very impressive manner the truly devotional attitude as expressed in visualization of the Deity, fervent aspiration, utter self-surrender, and genuine prayer for service and union. The richness of religious fervour suggested by the moving rhythm and smooth diction, and the quaint repetition of ideas and phrases, lose much of its charm in a translation into a modern language. However, a running translation is supplied below to help those who cannot follow the text.

The section under which these verses fall is separately called *Jitam te Stotra*—The Victory Hymn. In the devotional literature of Sanskrit and of some other similar languages we meet with hymns where the hymnodist who is a true devotee of God, or at least one who voices the thoughts of such, starting with a prayer for the victory of his Lord. In classical Tamil the thrilling opening song of Perialvar's Canticles, called *Tiruppallandu*, is a very famous example. The underlying idea is explained thus: The devotee of the Lord who is so absorbed in Him and with Whom he has assumed some human relation, forgets, as it were, for the time being, that the object of his fond love is the omnipotent Lord Himself, and fears that He may be exposed to harm from the wicked and demoniac. In a human relation this is

natural; for it is a psychological fact that extreme love scents prospective harm rather than good luck, even where reason allows no room for such suspicion. That is why the devotees of God are anxious for His welfare and victory; for He is to them a father, mother, master, or some other intimate relation.

जितं ते पुण्डरीकाक्ष नमस्ते विश्वभावन  
नमस्तेऽस्तु हृषीकेश महापुरुष पूर्वज ॥ १ ॥  
देवानां दानवानां च सामान्यमधिदैवतम्  
सर्वदा चरणद्वन्द्वं व्रजामि शरणं तव ॥ २ ॥  
नैव किञ्चित् परोक्षं ते प्रत्यक्षोऽसि न कस्यचित्  
नैव किञ्चिदसिद्धं ते न च सिद्धोऽसि कस्य चित् ॥ ३ ॥  
कार्याणां कारणं पूर्वं वचसां वाच्यमुत्तमम्  
योगानां परमां सिद्धिं परमं ते पदं विदुः ॥ ४ ॥  
न ते रूपं न चाकारो नायुधानि न वास्पदम्  
तद्यापि पुरुषाकारो भक्तानां त्वं प्रकाशसे ॥ ५ ॥

Victory to Thee, O lotus-eyed One. Obeisance to Thee, Maker of the universe. Prostration to Thee, Ruler of the senses, O supreme and ancient One (1). Thou art the common overlord of the good and wicked. I betake myself to Thee always for refuge (2). There is nothing mediate to Thee; nor art Thou perceived by any one through his senses. Nothing is denied to Thee; nor could anyone deny Thee (3). Thou art the first cause in the chain of causes, and the noblest and highest reference that words could convey. The wise declare that Thy state is the highest end of all religious disciplines (4). Thou art bereft of form, emblems, and abode; yet for the benefit of devotees Thou revealest Thyself in glorious personal form (5).

नमस्ते पीतवसन नमः कटकधारिणे  
नमो नीलालकावद्वेणीसुन्दर विग्रह ॥ ६ ॥  
स्फुरद्दलयकेयूरनूपुराङ्गदभूषणैः  
शोभनैर्भूषिताकार कल्याणगुणवारिधे ॥ ७ ॥  
नारायण नमस्तेऽस्तु पुण्डरीकायतेक्षण  
सुभ्रूलालासुनस सुस्मिताधरपल्लव ॥ ८ ॥  
पीनवृत्तायतभुज श्रीवत्सकृतलक्षण  
तनुमथ्य विशालाक्ष पद्मनाभ नमोऽस्तुते ॥ ९ ॥  
करुणापूर्णहृदय शङ्खचक्रगदाधर  
अमृतानन्दपूर्वाभ्यां लोचनाभ्यां विलोक्य ॥ १० ॥

I bow down most reverentially to Thee—a repository of all excellences—clad in yellow silk, wearing golden bracelets, shining

bangles, armlets and anklets, dazzling with the brilliance of ornaments, and embodied in a form of exceeding charm enhanced by the braided crest encircled by waves of curly hairs (6 & 7). Obeisance to Narayana. Obeisance to Thee, Whose eyes are attractively long as the lotus petals, Whose eyebrows, forehead, and nose are well-formed, Whose bud-red lips wear an enchanting smile, Whose long arms are round and stout, Who is marked by the curl of hair on the chest called Srivatsa, Whose waist is emaciated, eyes are broad, and navel is the source of the lotus on which Brahma resides (8 & 9). O Thou Whose heart is overflowing with compassion, O Wielder of conch, disc, and mace, glance at me with Thine eyes swimming in the nectar of bliss (10).

पाहि पाहि जगन्नाथ कृपया भक्तवत्सल  
 अनाथोऽहमधन्योऽहमकृतार्थः कथञ्चन ॥ ११ ॥  
 कृपया मां केवलया पृहाण मधुराधिप  
 विषयार्णवमग्नं मामुद्धर्तु त्वमिहार्हसि ॥ १२ ॥  
 जन्मप्रवृत्ति दासोऽस्मि शिष्योऽस्मि तनयोऽस्मि ते  
 त्वं च स्वामी गुरुत्मा पिता च मेम माधव ॥ १३ ॥  
 पिता माता सुहृद् वन्धुभ्राता पुत्रस्त्वमेव हि  
 विद्या धनं च काम्यं च नान्यत् किञ्चिद् त्वया विना ॥ १४ ॥  
 कर्मणा मनसा वाचा या चेष्टा मेम नित्यशः  
 केशवाराधने सा स्यात् जन्मजन्मान्तरेष्वपि ॥ १५ ॥  
 मनसा कर्मणा वाचा शिरसा वा कथञ्चन  
 त्वां विना नान्यमुद्दिश्य करिष्ये किञ्चिदप्यहम् ॥ १६ ॥

Save me, save me, O Lord of the universe, O Friend of the devout, save this helpless creature through Thy grace; for I am utterly dissatisfied; by no means I could feel restful amidst the imperfections of this world (11). Out of Thy mercy alone receive me, O Lord of Madhura. Thou oughtest to raise me sinking in the sea of sense-cravings; am I not Thy servant from the moment I was born? I should be taught by Thee, for I am Thy son. O sweet One, Thou art my master, my guru, and my self (12 & 13). Apart from Thee, there is emphatically no other object worthy of being desired—neither father, mother, friend, kinsmen, brother, son, knowledge, or wealth (14). My day to day activities, whatever they be, physical, mental, or vocal—may they contribute to the service of the Lord in this life and in coming ones (15). I shall not do any work, in any manner, with my head, mind, or body, having in intention anyone other than Thee (16).

धर्मार्थकाममोक्षेषु नेष्टा मेम कदाचन  
 स्वत्यादहपङ्कजत्वादजीवितं दीयतां मम ॥ १७ ॥

अहङ्कारार्थकामेषु प्रीतिरद्यैव नश्यतु  
 त्वां प्रपन्नस्य मे भक्तिर्वर्धतां श्रामति त्वयि ॥ १८ ॥  
 यत् कुत्र कुले वासो येषु केषु भवोऽस्तु मे  
 तव दास्यैकभोगे स्यात् सदा सर्वत्र मे रतिः ॥ १९ ॥  
 दुर्गतावपि जातायां त्वद्गतो मे मनोरथः  
 यदि नाशं न विन्देत् तावतास्मि कृती सदा ॥ २० ॥  
 विज्ञानं यदिदं प्राप्तं यदिदं स्थानमार्जितम्  
 जन्मान्तरेऽपि मे देव मा मृत् तस्य परिचयः ॥ २१ ॥  
 भक्त्यैकलभ्यः पुरुषोत्तमोऽसौ  
 जगत्प्रसूतिस्थितिनाशहेतुः  
 अकिञ्चनोनन्यगतिः शरण्य  
 गृह्णाम मां ह्येति नमुजान् ॥ २२ ॥

I do not at all crave for religious merit, riches, or salvation. Vouchsafe Thy lotus-feet for the delectation of my life (17). Let ruin seize those desires of mine that are prompted by vanity and conceit, this very day. May I have fervent devotion to Thy most excellent Self, for am I not Thy liegeman (18)? May I have perpetual delight in Thy service alone, in whichever region, or family, I may be born and continue to live (19). Even granting that hardships are in store for me, if my thoughts do not swerve from Thee—do not cease to flow towards Thee—by so much I shall consider myself successful and happy (20). O Divine lord, this intelligence I have come by, this exalted status I have earned in the course of my psychic evolution, through various incarnations—may not these be nullified even in succeeding births (21). Indeed, the supreme Deity—the ground for the origination, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe—is attainable by self-surrender and adoring love alone. O Thou worthy of refuge, O lotus-eyed One, accept me, harassed and disconsolate as I am (22).

सकलावराणातीत किङ्करोऽस्मि तवानघ  
 पुनः पुनः किङ्करोऽहं तवाहं पुरुषोत्तम ॥ २३ ॥  
 कामये तावत्त्वेन परिचर्यानुवर्त्तनम्  
 नित्यकिङ्करभावेन परिपृच्छीष्व मां विभो ॥ २४ ॥  
 सर्वेषु देशकालेषु सर्वावस्थासु चाच्युत  
 किङ्करोऽस्मि हृषीकेश भूयो भूयोऽस्मि किङ्करः ॥ २५ ॥  
 अनायाय जगन्नाथ शरण्य शरणार्थिने  
 प्रसीद सीदते मद्यं नमस्ते भक्तवत्सल ॥ २६ ॥

O Thou transcending the veils of ignorance, I am Thy vassal. O Thou holiest of the holy, let me repeat, I am Thy servant—Thine I am, O supreme One (23). What I crave for is only to be

at Thy beck and call, and serve Thee as Thine own property. O Thou omnipotent Master, take me as Thy eternal servant (24). O Thou Ruler of the senses, I declare again and again in all places, at all times, and in every condition, I am at Thy command, O immutable One (25). Lord of the universe, my sole Refuge, deign to be gracious towards me, weary and exhausted, O Thou solicitous of those devoted to Thee (26).

अहं भीतोऽस्मि देवेश ॥ सरेऽस्मिन् भयावहे  
पाहि मां पुण्डरीकाक्ष न जाने शरणं परम् ॥ २७ ॥  
नृशंसः पापकृत् क्रूरो वञ्चको निष्ठुरः सदा  
भवार्णवनिमग्नं मामनन्यं करुणोदये ॥ २८ ॥  
करुणापूर्णदृष्टिभ्यां दीनं मामवलोकय  
त्वदग्रे पतितं त्यक्तुं तावकं नार्हसि प्रभो ॥ २९ ॥  
मया कृतानि पापानि त्रिविधानि पुनः पुनः  
त्वत्पादपङ्कजं प्राप्तुं नान्यत् त्वत्करुणां विना ॥ ३० ॥  
तापक्षयमहाप्राह्मणीषणे भवसागरे  
मज्जतां नाथ नौरेष प्रणतिस्त्वत्पदापिता ॥ ३१ ॥

Lord of lords, I am alarmed by this terrific cycle of birth and death with its train of woes and wrongs. O Thou lotus-eyed One, save me, for I know no other refuge (27). Maybe I am malicious, sinful, cruel, deceitful, and callous, always; but I who am sinking in the ocean of cosmic life have none else as my saviour, O Thou ocean of mercy (28). Pray, turn a kindly look to me with Thy eyes full of compassion. It does not befit Thee to spurn one, afflicted, Thine own, O Master, who has flung himself before Thee (29). I have perpetrated sinful deeds of various kinds again and again through my threefold faculties, and I know that there is no means whatsoever to reach Thy feet except Thy grace (30). This reverent obeisance directed towards Thee is a veritable life-boat for those ship-wrecked in the ocean of transmigratory existence surrounded by the fierce fire of threefold miseries (31).

कथं त्वामसमाचारः पापप्रसवभूरहम्  
अर्चयामि दयासिन्धो पाहि मां शरणागतम् ॥ ३२ ॥  
शरीरं मम देवेश व्याधिभिः परिपीडितम्  
मनो मे पुण्डरीकाक्ष विषयानैव धावति ॥ ३३ ॥  
वाणी मम हृषीकेश मिथ्यापूर्णवृषिता  
एष साधनहीनोऽहं किं करिष्यामि केशव ॥ ३४ ॥  
उपचारापदेशेन कृतानहरहर्मया  
अपचारानिमान् सर्वान् क्षमस्व मधुसूदन ॥ ३५ ॥  
यच्चापराधं कृतवानज्ञानान् पुरुषोत्तम

मद्भक्त इति देवेश तत् सर्वं क्षन्तुमर्हसि ॥ ३६ ॥  
 अज्ञत्वादप्यशक्तत्वात् आलस्यत् दुष्टभावनात्  
 कृतापराधं कृपणं क्षन्तुमर्हसि मां विभो ॥ ३७ ॥  
 त्वत्पादकमलादन्यत् न मे जन्मान्तरेष्वपि  
 निमित्तं कुशलस्यास्ति येन गच्छामि सद्भक्तिम् ॥ ३८ ॥

Lord, save me who has taken refuge in Thee. Is it possible for one like me, devoid of proper conduct, a hotbed of wrong deeds, to worship Thee in the most suitable fashion (32)? My body is a prey for diseases; my mind rushes to sensuous objects only; the words that escape from my mouth are sullied by dishonesty and harshness; thus I am destitute of the approved means for Thy true worship. What shall I do, O Lord (33 & 34)? But daily I do worship: probably that is only an offence to Thee in the guise of worship. O Madhusudana, condone those transgressions, one and all (35). Whatever faults I may have committed through ignorance, O exalted One, Thou shouldst pardon me for them all, bearing in mind that I am devoted to Thee (36). Perhaps ignorance, perhaps inability, perhaps sloth, or perhaps it might even be wrong intention—whatever the cause be, O omnipotent Lord, Thou shouldst not take note of the faults of this distressed creature. For there is no hope of attaining good ends even in prospective lives, turning away from Thy lotus-feet (37 & 38).

नमः सर्वगुणातीत षड्गुणायादिवेधसे ।  
 सत्यज्ञानानन्तगुण ब्रह्मणे परमात्मने ॥ ३९ ॥  
 चिन्मात्ररूपिणे तुभ्यं नमस्तप्यन्तमूर्तये  
 अणिष्ठाय स्थविष्ठाय महिष्ठाय च ते नमः ॥ ४० ॥  
 नेदिष्ठाय यविष्ठाय सर्वान्तर्यामिने नमः  
 वर्षिष्ठाय जविष्ठाय कनिष्ठाय च ते नमः ॥ ४१ ॥  
 अश्वक्षाय स्वतन्त्राय निरपेक्षाय शासते  
 अच्युतायाधिकाराय तेजसां निधये नमः ॥ ४२ ॥  
 सच्चिदानन्दरूपाय वरेण्याय नमो नमः  
 प्रणवप्रतिपादाय नमः प्रणवरूपिणे ॥ ४३ ॥  
 अनेकमूर्तये तुभ्यमक्षराय च ते नमः  
 व्यापिने वेदवेद्याय नमस्ते परमात्मने ॥ ४४ ॥  
 शान्ताय च विशुद्धाय तेजसे परमात्मने  
 नमो भगवते विष्णो वासुदेवामितशुते ॥ ४५ ॥

○ Thou Ordainer Who art beyond all modes of Nature, to Thee—treasurehouse of sixfold Powers—the supreme being and essence of all that exists, I offer my reverence. Thou art the repository of countless excellences, existence and intelligence,

intelligence rendered corporeal, the One extolled in Vedantic texts, subtlest, grossest, greatest, nearest, farthest, omnipervient, oldest, speediest, overseeing all, independent, unrelated, Ruler of all, immutable, unchangeable, fountain of light, existence-knowledge-bliss, most adorable, denotation of the sacred syllable Om, Om itself, omnicorporeal, imperishable, all-pervading, known through holy Writ, supreme Self, calm, holy, and luminous—to Thee, most revered Lord, omnipresent Vasudeva of immeasurable splendour, I bow down again and again in all reverence (39-45).

संसारविषयावर्तसङ्कुले च महाभये  
 अपारे दुस्तरेऽगाधे पतितं कर्मभिःस्वकैः ॥ ४६ ॥  
 मामुद्धर दयासिन्धो सिन्धोरस्मात् सुदुस्तरात्  
 बुध्यैव नय गोविन्द मुक्त्युपायेन वर्त्मना ॥ ४७ ॥  
 क्वाहमत्यन्तदुर्बुद्धिः क्व चात्महितवीक्षणम्  
 यद्वितं मम देवेश तदाज्ञापय माधव ॥ ४८ ॥  
 त्वमेव वेत्सि श्रेयो मे नेदमेतदिति च ।  
 बुद्धियोगं च मे देहि येन त्वामुपयाम्यहम् ॥ ४९ ॥  
 यजन्मनः प्रभृति मोहवशं गतेन  
 नानापराधशतमाचरितं मया ते  
 अन्तर्बहिश्च सकलं तव पश्यतो मे  
 तत् चक्षुर्मर्हसि विभो करुणावशेन ॥ ५० ॥  
 अप्रमेयमजं विष्णुं वागतीतं सुरेश्वरम्  
 वागतीतं परं शान्तं शरणं त्वां गतोऽस्म्यहम् ॥ ५१ ॥

Save me from this abysmal, terrible, shoreless sea of worldly existence into which I have fallen due to my own Karma (46). O Lord, lead me from this insurmountable sea through the path of emancipation, only by giving proper direction to my intellect (47). 'There is an unbridgeable gulf between me, extremely vile and perverted in thought, and the possibility of judging what will be wholesome for me. O Lord, sweet and supreme, therefore, command that which will conduce to my true good (48). Thou alone couldst discriminate and judge what would tend to my supreme well-being, so that I may be united to Thee (49). From birth onwards I have done a hundred different offences to Thee, owing to my own delusion. Thou Who art the witness of my interior and exterior shouldst not set any store by them, out of Thy mercy (50). I betake to Thee for ever—O immeasurable, unborn, supremely calm, ineffable Vishnu, God of gods—for refuge (51).



## THE REFORM OF THE SANDHYA

**Dr. A. S. Altekar, M.A., L.L.B., D.Litt.**, is the Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Benares Hindu University, and the author of *Women in Hindu Civilization* and other works. In the following paragraphs he explains the need and method of reforming the Twilight Prayer of 'twice-born' Hindus.

Reverence and solemnity form the core of the religious attitude, and nothing helps them more than sacral associations and authority of time. Since language has a communicative as well as an emotive role even where meaning is not understood, words are sufficient to serve the latter purpose by the force of usage. Had it not been for this fact, sacred formulas and traditional prayers would have been dropped out of our daily devotions long ago reducing them to zero. The ultra-rationalists and light-hearted pragmatists of the present generation would perhaps appreciate a clean omission of this relic of antiquity, Sandhya, rather than observe a revised or modified form of it. But there are many, even outside the pale of the 'twice-born' classes, to whom prayer is really food for the Spirit. They would certainly welcome an intelligible Sandhya made up to date and liberally disseminated, somewhat on the lines suggested by the present writer. The orthodox 'no-changers' ought to help them, bearing in mind the pregnant words of Jesus Christ: 'The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath'.—Ed.

world, and so they are more alive to external attractions than to the spiritual problems that concern the Inner World. If this was true of the ancient times when life was plain and simple, it has become hundred-fold more so in the modern days when amusements, recreations, and concerts drag the human mind at every street-corner. It is but natural that spiritual things should cease to have their former attraction not only in the West but also in the East. Here in India, a section of the orthodox Hindu community no doubt recites the formulae and hymns of the daily prayer, but the rest of the society is becoming growingly indifferent to it. And the elders continue to bemoan the irreligiousness of the rising generation, which does not care to offer even the daily short prayers. They attribute this indifference to the spirit of the times, to the advent of the Kali Yuga, and reconcile themselves to the situation by regarding it as an inevitable development. It is however necessary for the Hindu society to ponder over the matter carefully and see whether it is really an inevitable development.

Faith, religiousness, and spirituality are no doubt at a discount in the present age, but the circumstance alone cannot explain the indifference of the rising generation to the traditional prayer or Sandhya. The present writer knows of many Hindus who do derive a spiritual elevation by the recitation of the Mantras of the daily prayer, though they do not understand their meaning. They believe that they are the very words

ONE Upanishadic writer has naively observed that our senses have a natural outlet facing the external

of God and as such have the power of refining and elevating their mind and spirit. While they offer their prayers (Sandhya), they are really transported to a higher plane and become oblivious of the world for the time being.

Rightly or wrongly, the rising generation, however, believes in the supremacy of reason and has admittedly very little of faith or Sraddha. Will it be reasonable for us to expect that it should go on reciting every morning and evening a prayer, the meaning of which it cannot comprehend? An orthodox person may possibly derive immense satisfaction by the thought that the prayers that he is offering were offered by his ancestors several thousands of years ago. This very idea may bring that solemnity to his mind which is a *sine qua non* for every prayer. But the mere antiquity of the prayer fails to appeal to the rising generation. To recite Sanskrit Mantras, the meaning of which is a sealed book to it, is naturally regarded by it as a mere meaningless and soulless formality, which it is reluctant to observe. If therefore we desire that the Sandhya should be daily performed by every Hindu, we shall have to make it intelligible to him. In other words, he shall have to modernize and vernacularize it on a wide scale.

But mere vernacularization is not sufficient. We shall have to reform the Sandhya as well. And this need not frighten us. For our ancestors also have reformed the Sandhya several times.

A glance at the traditional Sanskrit Sandhya makes this abundantly clear. It opens with a salutation to twenty-four deities, none of which is

a Vedic one. It is quite clear, therefore, that the Sandhya of our Vedic ancestors could not have contained this salutation to Keshava, Narayana, etc. If these deities themselves were unknown in those days, how could they have been invoked at the time of the Sandhya?

The rest of the structure of the Sandhya shows that it was compiled at a time when the Vedic Sanskrit had become a dead language and was being supplanted by the classical Sanskrit. The Rishi, metre, etc. of every Vedic Mantra are first explained in classical Sanskrit before its recitation commences. Side by side with some Vedic Mantras, there are some in classical Sanskrit also; they were obviously added later on in order that the Sandhya should become at least partly intelligible to the reciter. To this category belong the Mantras in eulogy of the Earth, as also those which point out how the salutation to different gods really reaches the Supreme Creator ultimately. The concluding verses are

(यस्यस्मृत्या च नामोक्त्या तपोयागक्रियादिषु ।  
न्यूनं संपूर्णतां याति सद्यो बन्दे तमच्युतम् ॥  
मन्त्रहीनं क्रियाहीनं भक्तिहीनं जनार्दन ।  
यत्पूजितं मया सर्वं परिपूर्णं तदस्तु मे ॥)

in classical Sanskrit, which was then understood by everybody. They cleverly touch the chord of Bhakti in the heart of the reciter and communicate to God that the prayer, howsoever imperfect it may have been, should be kindly accepted by Him.

The present Sandhya is thus a mixture of two languages, the Vedic Sanskrit and the Classical Sanskrit; the prayers in the latter were attached to the Mantras in the former in

order to make it at least partly intelligible to the ordinary man. A number of later deities like Keshava, Narayana, and Vasudeva were also introduced in it in order to meet the viewpoints of the followers of the new sects which had subsequently come into existence. Care however was taken not to expunge the earlier Vedic Mantras, which formed part of the Sandhya from times immemorial. They were universally believed to be the very words of God; people were therefore anxious to recite them though they did not all understand their meaning.

If the modern Hinduism desires to make its Sandhya really popular, it will have to reform it on somewhat similar lines. If the new Sandhya really appeals to the popular mind, there is no reason why it should not be enthusiastically offered even by the rising generation. Mere translation of the Sandhya in the different vernaculars is not however sufficient for the purpose; we shall have to introduce some changes in it also. I propose to indicate them briefly here.

It is but natural that the Sandhya should have opened with a salutation to different deities. In the present list we find that the Vedic deities have been altogether excluded,—for the Vedic religion was then practically out of vogue; there are only Pauranic deities. It is further curious to notice that all the twenty-four names are the synonyms of only one deity, viz. Vishnu. There is no salutation to Shiva, or Rama, or Krishna. The present day Hinduism has outlived the belief in the existence of separate and independent deities; it holds that all of them are but the manifestations of one and the same Supreme God. It is therefore un-

necessary now to add to or subtract from this list of twenty-four deities in order to make its appeal universal; we should omit the list altogether and have in its place *Om Paramatmane* or *Paramesvaraya Namah*.

The next item in the Sandhya is the *marjana* or the sprinkling of the sacred water, when Mantras are recited in prayer to waters. This is, as a matter of fact, done twice, once with a small hymn and then again with a large one. We no doubt feel a purifying effect when we sprinkle ourselves with water; so we should allow this *marjana* to stand at the beginning but omit its repetition.

The next Vedic Mantra is a prayer to Surya praying that whatever sins may have been committed by the person should be kindly condoned. This prayer should be retained and also translated into the Vernacular, in order to heighten its effect on the mind of the reciter.

Now comes the *marjana* a second time; I have already said that its repetition is superfluous and so it should be omitted. Then comes the Aghamarshana Mantra; it should be omitted now as it propounds a theory of creation which is no longer subscribed to. The Mantras in praise of the Earth, which are in classical Sanskrit, should also be dropped now; they would not appeal to the modern mind which may or may not believe in the existence of ghosts that are referred to in them. After this there is the famous Savitri or Gayatri Mantra in praise of the Sun. Then comes a further prayer to the Sun in the morning and a prayer to Varuna in the evening.

The vast majority of the Vedic Mantras in the present Sandhya are in praise of Agni or Surya. These

were once very popular deities and it is but natural that they should prominently figure in the Sandhya. These deities however do not appeal to the modern mind, which regards them more or less as natural phenomena. There is no reason why we should include so many prayers to the Sun to the exclusion of some really fine hymns in the *Rigveda*. Some of these should be included to the exclusion of some of the hymns in praise of the Sun. I should think that we should include the Nasadiya hymn in the new Sandhya which undoubtedly represents the highest flight of the philosophical thought of the Hindu race.

Upanishads are altogether unrepresented in the present Sandhya; in my opinion it is a serious blemish. We should have some select prayers from them. The same may be said about the omission of all the references to the *Gita* in the present Sandhya; we should have the seven verses describing the Sthitaprajna either in the original or in translation.

In every province of India, there have flourished a number of saint-poets, who have composed very beautiful and appealing devotional songs in the different vernaculars. Some of these should be added in the new Sandhya; nay, they should form its main feature. They are intelligible to every individual and would therefore be recited with real fervour and devotion.

To sum up, the new Sandhya should open with a salutation to Paramesvara and should be followed by the sprinkling of the sacred water to the accompaniment of the old Vedic

prayer. This should be followed by an appeal to the Sun to forgive the sins that one may have committed. Then should come the recitation of the famous Savitri Mantra, which should be followed by the Nasadiya-sukta. A few prayers from the Upanishads and the description of the Sthitaprajna from the *Gita* may close the Sanskrit section of the Sandhya. These Mantras should be learnt by heart in the original Vedic and classical Sanskrit, but their vernacular meaning also should be explained to every person. We shall be thereby preserving the old tradition and making it also intelligible to the modern mind.

Then should follow the vernacular section, which may be approximately of the same length as the Sanskrit one. A certain number of songs should be selected by the leaders of the society, but the individual also should be permitted and encouraged to add his own favourite selections. The Sandhya should conclude with a prayer which should emphasize the essential unity of the Hindu society and the duty of every member to help his brethren. The details about the new Sandhya can be satisfactorily settled only by inviting suggestions from competent persons and by settling the details in their light.

It is to be devoutly hoped that the Hindu Society will give its serious attention to this problem. Unless it is properly tackled, and that too at an early date, the traditional Sandhya may not have a long life even in the orthodox sections of the Hindu Society.

A. S. ALTEKAR

## HOLINESS IS THE TEST OF GENUINE ECSTASY

The following paragraphs describing Sri Ramakrishna's visit to the Vaishnava festival at Panihati, a village a few miles to the north of Dakshineswar, are translated from Swami Saradananda's *Life of the Master* entitled *Sri Sri Ramakrishnalilaprasanga* written in Bengali. They incidentally throw light on what genuine God-intoxication is and how it differs from simulated piety. The writer of the book was an eye-witness of the incidents described.—Ed.

### THE HISTORY OF PANIHATI FESTIVAL

THE thirteenth day of the bright fortnight in the month of Jyeshtha (June-July) was at hand. On this day there was an annual festival of the Vaishnavas at the village of Panihati on the bank of the Ganges, a few miles to the north of Calcutta. This festival is associated with the meeting of two great Vaishnava devotees, Raghunath Das Goswami and Sri Nityananda. The burning renunciation and dispassion of Raghunath Goswami, one of the foremost disciples of Sri Chaitanyadeva, is ever green in the memory of Bengal. The only son of his father, the husband of a beautiful wife, and the possessor of immense wealth, he decided to renounce all these, and to go to Santipur to take shelter at the feet of Sri Chaitanya. But Sri Chaitanya, realizing that his dispassion was only a passing mood, commanded him to go back to his house and stay with his family for some length of time more. In obedience to the will of Sri Chaitanya, Raghunath returned to his house, and spent

his time like other family men, although the strong tendency for renunciation was latent in his mind. He discharged all his worldly duties for the sake of his father, solely guided by his advice. Though thus living with the family, he often felt an urge to spend some time in the company of Sri Chaitanya's devotees, and would accordingly do so, with the permission of his father. Days passed in this way, with Raghunath ever watching for an opportunity to renounce the world once for all. In the meantime, Sri Chaitanya adopted the life of Sannyasa and went to stay at Nilachala. At that time Nityananda, who had taken on himself the mission of spreading the Vaishnava gospel, was preaching in the various parts of Bengal with the village of Khoddah as his headquarters, and was taking large numbers of people into the Vaishnava fold with the help of Sankirtana and other methods of preaching. Nityananda, with disciples and his followers, was once staying at the village of Panihati for the propagation of spiritual truths. Raghunath went to meet him at that time. Nityananda then commanded Raghunath to offer flattened rice, curds, milk, sugar, and plantains to the Deity, and partake of the consecrated food in the company of devotees. Accepting the proposal with great joy, Raghunath that day gladdened the hearts of hundreds of devotees by feeding them sumptuously on the banks of the Ganges. When he went to take leave of Nityananda at the close of the day, the latter said in an ecstatic mood: 'Your

proper time has come. If you were to renounce the world and go to Sri Chaitanya at Nilachala, he would give you refuge now. In order to complete your spiritual life, he would also entrust you into the hands of Sanatana Goswami for instruction.' Raghunath was rejoiced beyond all measures at these words of Nityananda, and returning home for a brief period, he went to Nilachala renouncing the world once for all. From that time forward the Vaishnava devotees used to hold this annual festival at Panihati in memory of Sri Chaitanya and Nityananda and also of the renunciation of Raghunath Goswami, as well as with a view to get for themselves the grace of God. In course of time this festival came to be known among the devotees as *Chidarmahotsav* (the festival of flattened rice).

#### DECISION TO ATTEND THE FESTIVAL

Sri Ramakrishna had attended this festival several times. But after his English educated disciples had begun to visit him, he could not for various reasons attend the festival for several years past. This year (1885) he desired to go for the festival along with his devotees, and said to us: 'That day there will be a festival in which large numbers of people will participate with great joy. The whole place will be reverberating with the chanting of the Lord's name. "Young Bengal" like you might never have witnessed anything like that. Come, let us all go to see it.' A group of devotees including Ramachandra Dutt was very much rejoiced at this proposal; but another section of them did not approve of it and even dissuaded the Master from going, considering his disease in the

throat. To satisfy this latter group of devotees the Master said: 'I shall start from here early in the morning after taking food. I shall be staying there only for two hours. This is not likely to have any bad effect. The throat will be made worse only if I pass into ecstasies frequently. I shall, however, try to check these moods.' These words of the Master removed all opposition, and the devotees began to make arrangements for the visit to Panihati.

The festival came off on the thirteenth day of the bright fortnight of Jyeshtha. At nine o'clock in the morning about twenty-five people were ready at Dakshineswar with two boats. Some came on foot. A boat specially arranged for the Master, was already in the ghat. A number of women devotees had arrived very early in the morning. They were helping the Holy Mother in preparing the food for the Master and the devotees. By ten o'clock all had finished their meals, and were ready to start.

As soon as the Master had finished his meal, the Holy Mother enquired of him, through a woman devotee, whether she too was to go to the festival. The Master said in reply to the woman devotee: 'You are all going—is it not? So she too may go, if she likes.' Hearing this, the Holy Mother said: 'A large number of people are accompanying the Master. Then too, there will be a very great crowd. In such circumstances it is very difficult for me to get down from the boat and go about seeing the festival. So I am not going.' After she had decided not to go, the Holy Mother gave food to two or three lady devotees who wished to accompany the Master and asked them to get into the boat.

### THE MASTER AT THE PANIHATI FESTIVAL

The party arrived at Panihati by about midday. We saw there a large number of people gathered round an old banyan tree on the side of the Ganges. Many Vaishnava devotees were singing devotional songs in great joy. But it did not seem that most of them were singing with real absorption in the Lord's name. There was a lifelessness about the whole affair, and one had a feeling that something was lacking on the occasion. When they were going in the boat, and also after their arrival at the destination, many of the Master's principal devotees like Narendra, Balaram, Girishchandra, Ramachandra, and Mahendra, had specially persuaded him not to join any Kirtan party and get excited. For when the Master got overpowered by devotional music, he would pass into ecstatic moods, and this would have a bad effect on his throat.

After getting down from the boat, the Master and the devotees went straight to the house of Mani Sen. Mani Sen was overjoyed at their arrival. All the people in his house prostrated at the feet of the Master and took him to their drawing room which was furnished with tables, chairs, sofas, and carpets in the western fashion. After sitting in the room for about fifteen minutes, the Master and devotees went to worship at Mani Sen's temple dedicated to Radhakanta.

The temple was very near to the drawing room. Getting out of the room, we went straight in front of the *natmandir* of the temple, and had a view of the charming image of Rādhā united with Krishna. After looking

at it for a time, the Master prostrated in a semi-absorbed mood. Getting down five or six steps from the *natmandir*, one reaches the *chakmīlān* of the temple in front of which is the broad courtyard and the main gateway. The gateway is constructed in such a way that one could have a view of the image from there. While the Master was prostrating, a Kirtan party came into the courtyard and began to sing. For all the Kirtan parties coming for the occasion generally visit the temple first, and then go to take part in the festival. Just then there came into the courtyard a middle aged man of large proportions, fair in complexion and wearing a tuft of hair and the sacred cord of the 'twice born'. On his body there were the paints and marks characteristic of pious men, and he was telling the beads which he carried in a bag. He had an upper cloth, a wearing cloth newly washed, broad, and tastefully folded, and a bag of money tucked on one side of the waist. On the whole he had the appearance of a Vaishnava priest who had dressed himself for the occasion and had come to the festival with a view to collect whatever money he could get from the people. As if to create a new enthusiasm in the Kirtan party, as well as to impress the visitors with his importance and piety, he joined the party of singers and began to gesticulate, shout, and dance like one caught in an ecstatic mood.

After prostrating, the Master stood on one side of the *natmandir* to listen to the Kirtan. Seeing the Goswami's dress and simulated ecstasy, the Master smiled and said to Narendra and others, 'Look at that impostor!' At the Master's words, the others

too smiled. They grew less anxious about the Master seeing that he was checking himself, and did not pass into ecstasy. But the very next moment, almost within the twinkling of an eye, they saw the Master rushing into the Kirtan party, and standing in their midst in an ecstatic mood. The devotees thereupon came down from the *natmandir* and stood in a ring round the Master, who was now moving majestically in ecstasy, now standing still in perfect absorption. As they saw the Master moving rapidly forward and backward in keeping with the beating of time, they felt as if he were a fish sporting in a sea of bliss. All the movements and poses of his body expressed this rare feeling of joy and the beauty and sweetness that freely flow in its wake. All have witnessed the coquettish blandishments and expressions of feeling by men and women in ordinary dances, but such performances cannot reveal to us even a shadow of that austere beauty visible in the Master's frantic dance resulting from the possession of divine moods. To one who was privileged to see the Master's dance, with his form lashed into a series of movements, the doubt would arise whether his body was made of hard inert substance at all. He would feel as if high waves raging in an ocean of bliss, were threatening to break and dissolve all things before them in their furious onset. When a real thing and an imitation of it are placed before people no one need tell them anything as to which they should select. So when people saw the Master, they ceased to look at the Goswami mentioned before, and began to dance round him with their enthusiasm heightened a hundredfold.

Nearly half an hour was spent like this, before the Master was restored to his normal mood partially. Thereupon the devotees tried to remove the Master from the Kirtan party, and decided to get back to their boats after visiting a place, about a mile away from there, which was once the house of Raghav Pandit, an attendant of Sri Chaitanya, and where an image of Radhakrishna and a *salagrama*, worshipped originally by the Pandit, were installed. The Master agreed to this plan and left Mani Sen's temple. But the Kirtan party did not leave the Master. They followed him singing with great enthusiasm. So after the Master had walked a few paces, he again fell into Samadhi; when he came down to a state of semi-absorption, the devotees persuaded him to proceed, but before he had gone a few steps forward, he fell into a trance again. As this happened frequently, the devotees could proceed only at a very slow pace.

We have never seen after that the same dazzling divine beauty that was visible in the Master's entranced and lustrous body that day. It is beyond the imagination of man to understand how such sudden transformation could come over his body, giving it an angelic luminosity, when caught in an ecstatic mood. His naturally tall body appeared to us taller than usual, and as light and ethereal as figures seen in dreams. His dark complexion was turned into shining golden colour. His ecstatic face seemed to illuminate the four sides with the unusual brilliance that was radiating from it. His face, expressive of majesty, mercy, peace, and beatitude, wore an incomparable smile that attracted the common



people to him and held them spell-bound in complete oblivion of all their earthly conditions. The blending of the lustre of his body with the ochre colour of his silk cloth gave him the appearance of one surrounded by flames of fire. On stepping into the road from Mani Sep's house, the members of the Kirtan party, seeing his luminous body, charming dance, and deep ecstatic moods, began to sing with a novel fervour and enthusiasm:

Who chants the name of Hari by  
the banks of the celestial Ganges!  
It seems that Nitai who distributes  
Divine Love has come.

O friend, who chants the name of  
Hari!

Who takes the name of Radha!  
It seems Nitai who distributes  
Divine Love has come.

(Our Nitai who distributes Divine  
Love has come)

If Nitai does not come, who will  
soothe our burning hearts.

Here comes our Nitai who distrib-  
utes Divine Love!

When singing the last line, they pointed at the Master with their fingers, and dancing in ecstatic joy, said again and again, 'Here comes our Lord who distributes Divine Love!' The enthusiasm of the Kirtan party attracted a large crowd to the spot, and these men, inspired by the sight of the Master, either joined the Kirtan party with great zeal, or if they did not take part in it, kept on looking at the Master with fixed gazes, their hearts being filled with an indescribable joy. The contagion of spiritual enthusiasm raised in this manner spread in that vast concourse of people, and other Sankirtan parties and more men gathered round the Master. Thus centering round

the ecstatic figure of the Master, a very large body of men gradually proceeded towards the house of Raghav Pandit.

Some women devotees were just then bringing for the Master some mud pots full of fruits and sweets that had been offered to Sri Chaitanya and Nityananda under the banyan tree on the banks of the Ganges. By the time the Master had just reached in front of Raghav Pandit's house, a Vaishnava mendicant of bad character appeared suddenly on the scene. Pretending to sigh with divine love and spiritual exaltation, he snatched away a pot of consecrated food from the hands of one of the ladies mentioned above, and put some portions of it into the Master's mouth. The Master was then standing still in ecstasy. As soon as the mendicant touched him in the face, the Master's ecstasy broke. With his whole body shivering, he spat out the food given by him, and washed his mouth. From this all people understood the mendicant to be a hypocrite, and began to cast at him glances full of disgust and anger.

The man thereupon disappeared from the spot. The Master then took a bit of consecrated food from a devotee and asked the rest to be distributed among people. It took them on the whole three hours to cover the distance of one mile to the house of Raghav Pandit. For about half an hour the Master was at Raghav Pandit's house, worshipping the holy image and taking some rest. Within half an hour the crowd that followed the Master had dispersed. Observing this, the devotees now escorted the Master to the boat.

Now a remarkable incident took place. Hearing that the Master had

come for the festival, Navachaitanya Mitra, an inhabitant of Konnagar, was going about in search of him. He had a great longing to see the Master, and when he just now saw him in the boat about to leave the place, he rushed forward like one intoxicated, and with powerful emotional outbursts fell flat at his feet imploring his grace and mercy. Moved by his devotion and yearning, the Master touched him in a state of spiritual exaltation. Though we do not know what wonderful spiritual experience the devotee had at that time, we saw that the Master's touch transformed the man's anguished cries into a transport of spiritual joy, and he began to dance frantically in the boat, like one unconscious of external surroundings, and prostrate before the Master again and again uttering various hymns in praise of him. After a time the Master calmed him by stroking his back several times and gave him several instructions. Though Navachaitanya had seen the Master many times before, he could not receive his grace like this on earlier occasions. But having received it now, he transferred the responsibilities of his household to his son, and spent the rest of his life in a hut of leaves on the banks of the Ganges, engaging himself in devotional practices and in speaking of the Master's greatness to people. From now forwards Navachaitanya, who was advanced in age, used to enter into ecstatic moods while singing devotional songs, and seeing his devotion and spiritual joy, people used to hold him in great esteem. Thus as a result of the Master's grace, Navachaitanya was able to enkindle devotion in the hearts of many.

#### RETURN TO DAKSHINESWAR

After Navachaitanya had taken leave of him, the Master asked the boat to be started. By the time we proceeded a little, it was dusk, and when we reached Dakshineswar it was about half past eight. After the Master had seated himself in his room, the devotees prostrated before him and took leave of him. They all then got into the boat. One of them, who had left his shoes behind, now ran up to take them. When the Master saw him and learnt the reason for going back, he began to ridicule him thus: 'Fortunately you have come to know of it before the boat started. Otherwise the loss would have killed all the joy that you derived today.' Again when the young man prostrated and took leave of him, the Master said: 'What is your impression about today's festival. Was there not the chanting of the Lord's name everywhere?' The young man assented. Then, referring to the spiritual ecstasy experienced by some of the devotees at the festival, the Master said in praise of Naren Junior: 'The boy has been coming here only for a short time. He is getting spiritual ecstasies even by this short contact. The other day he was in spiritual ecstasy and was unconscious of the external world for an hour. He says that his mind is nowadays absorbed in the contemplation of God without form. Naren Junior is a good boy—isn't it? Won't you go to his house one day and get acquainted with him?' The young man agreed to whatever he said, but added: 'Sir, I do not like any one as much as I do Naren Senior. So I do not wish to go to the house of Naren Junior.'

Thereupon the Master said upbraiding him: 'You are narrow and one-sided. Narrowness is the sign of a petty mind. We decorate the image of God with five flowers. One who cannot enjoy in the company of devotees of various types is indeed mean-minded. You must certainly go to the house of Naren Junior—won't you?' He agreed to do so, as

he had no other alternative, and then took leave of the Master again. Afterwards we came to understand that this young disciple went to the house of Naren Junior, and as a result of his conversation with him, one of the complicated problems agitating his mind was solved. That day the boat reached Calcutta only by ten o'clock at night.

### INDIVIDUAL METHOD: INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SCIENCE OF EDUCATION

In this contribution Dr. V. N. Sharma, B.A., B.T., Ph.D. (Heidelberg), attempts to show how far the ancient Indian teachers introduced the famous 'Individual method' in order to watch the individual uniqueness of the pupil and direct him to follow his own path so as to reach the Godhead with full consciousness.—Ed.

ANCIENT teachers took special care not to hamper the individuality of the student. The student was considered as a potential force, a spark of the Divinity, and the teacher watched his or her individual uniqueness and directed it to follow its own path to reach the Godhead with full consciousness. Hence the ancient method may be called the individual system of instruction. Intelligent students were left alone to discover their own path; but the teacher took special care of those who were slow in understanding. The ancient saying 'Instruct the inert and sharpen the dull' is seen in actual practice in all methods of teaching. We find this well followed by the Buddhist and other teachers.

Taking into consideration these unique types and temperaments, instruction was given in accordance with the pupil's individual type; and the caste system was taken as the basis in all periods of Indian History.

In order to understand the student's potentiality and his individual uniqueness, a teacher usually follows a particular method. He does not impart instruction for some time. A period of probation intervenes, and during this probationary period opportunities for different services and activities are given, both in his house and in the company of his classmates and companions outside. It is laid down in the *Usanas Samhita*, III: 33-34, that 'the teacher must test or examine his pupil. All irregularities in the personal life of the student, his daily habits, he has to watch, and correct if there are any faults in them; and then alone he should instruct him in the realm of studies.'

To bring home his teachings and his instructions the teacher had to take the greatest care in discovering the aptitudes and fitness (*Adhikara*) of

each and every individual student. He rejected such students who had neither the tradition nor the aptitude for acquiring knowledge. In his idea it is indeed a bad policy to spend time and energy in making one an 'indifferent priest (Brahman), who could have become an excellent soldier, or an expert craftsman.' It is the ancient Ideal, 'Better die with learning rather than plant it in a barren soil' (*Chandogya Brahmana*). 'The highest mystery should not be given to one whose passions have not been subdued, not even to the son or disciple if he is unworthy' (*Svetasvatara Up.*, VI: 22). 'Let no man preach this most secret doctrine to any one who is not his son, or his disciple, or who is not of a serene mind. To him alone who is devoted to his teacher and endowed with all necessary qualities this may be communicated' (*Maitrayana Up.*, VI: 28). In this connection the story of the Goddess of Learning who came to a teacher is often quoted. 'She said: "Preserve me. I am thy highest treasure. Do not impart me to a malicious person; for thereby my potency will be kept uninjured"' (*Manu*, II: 114). "Impart me only to him whom thou shalt know to be pure, perfectly content, and free from the follies of the world"' (*Manu*, II: 115). Further in another text it is said that 'even in the absence of a means of livelihood, rather let a Vedic preceptor die with his knowledge than impart it to an unworthy recipient' (*Manu*, II: 113). So we read of a teacher who refused to impart any instruction to a pupil until he proved to the satisfaction of the former his competence, mental and moral, to receive the instruction, especially when that was connected

with the subtlest aspects of truths of life (vide *Katha Up.*, Ch. I).

Hence the ancient Indian method of teaching is Adesa, recommendations or suggestions rather than commands. Every one has the capacity to develop and express his own right understanding, and it is the duty of a teacher to unveil this mystery of the student, and thus lead him from non-understanding to understanding. In this connection the teacher shows to the pupil two ways to attain his desired end: The higher and the lower paths—Para and Aparā. That which conquers all illusion, ignorance, and non-knowing, is known as Para. In this path, the teacher takes away the obstacles that disturb the pupil in his search. Thus alone he brings out the knowledge which is within the student himself; and thus he sets him to begin his wanderings in all regions of knowledge (vide *Mundaka Up.*).

Let us go further into the details of his methods. We see the teacher making his pupils see the Self (Ātman) in their eyes—the first step which he takes up in the method of instruction. In other words, he teaches how to concentrate on a particular thing with one-pointedness. The first step in Yoga is concentration on the tip of the nose with the eyes, to meditate on the Self. It is said that the teacher could remove the bandage from his pupil's eye in this way. Through this method he further tries to make the pupil learn that he is other than his body, senses, and other organic forces that surround his body and mind. It does not mean that he has thrown all these away; no; as a matter of fact, there they are, and he is the life in them, living as a resident or indweller to

fulfill his part in life; and all these he uses as his instruments on his path. Moreover the teacher makes him learn that he is a spark, a part of the Self, as the bull yoked to a cart is led by the driver. He is His property and exists to express and represent Him in this world.

The moment the pupil understands this mystery the teacher goes further to make him overcome the things that attempt to take an upperhand and hinder him from his path. All the passions, caste-pride, fame, sleep, anger, bragging, personal beauty, and fragrance the student is to overcome (Cf. *Gopatha Brahmana*, II: 1-2). All these forces of nature he has, instead of destroying them, to direct into a creative channel. Then the caste-pride turns into Brahnavarchasam (dynamic illumination that points the way to the Most High). If he works for his teacher and for his fellow-pupils, he obtains fame. Even though he is sleepy, he obtains that in the python. If humble in spirit he does not injure any one in anger; he obtains that in the boar; if he does not perform braggart tricks in the water, he obtains it in the water; if he does not look at a naked maiden, he obtains the beauty that is in the maiden; if he does not smell plants and trees, after having cut them, he becomes himself fragrant (Cf. Bloomfield: *Atharva Veda*, p. 311).

All these methods were actually enforced on many students.

Then the teacher will begin to create a longing in him to reach the Highest Self by describing His abode and His form. Then alone the pupil is qualified for the next step in education, known as Brahma Vidya, instruction on the Self itself. Stu-

dents are also enjoined to seek such a preceptor who could teach the mystery of the Self, leading them from their world to the region of the Self. 'He should approach only a teacher who knows the end of all knowledge (Vedanta) and who sees Brahman in meditation' (*Mundaka Up.*, I: 2-12). Sri Krishna also follows this ancient path by enjoining on his disciple Arjuna to 'obtain this knowledge by prostration, by service, and by questioning. Those that possess the knowledge, the Wise, and those that have had realization of the Tattva (the Self) will teach you then that wisdom' (*The Gita*, IV: 34).

A question is often asked why the teacher insists on removing the bandage—ignorance identified always as bandage (Bandha)—from the eyes of his pupils. The answer of the ancients is: 'If a person's eyes be bandaged, and he be brought from the Gandhara country and left in a lonely place, he will turn to the east, or to the south, or will look down, and cry, "I have been left here with my eyes bandaged". If some good man removes the bandage and says, "The Gandhara country is in this direction; go in this direction," then the person will go from village to village, making inquiries. If he be clever and does not forget what he is told, will reach the Gandhara country. Similarly happens to him who goes to a teacher' (*Chand. Up.*, IV: 14, 1, 2). He receives instruction on his purpose in this life through meditation and instruction imparted in accordance with the state of understanding in his search. It is said that such instruction and guidance from a teacher are necessary, serviceable, and helpful in his path.

He who touches the foundation of this knowledge cannot be quiet. There is so much he could think, as his whole constitution is excited and stimulated by this thought, by this dynamic energy and consciousness, that he begins to peep into this highest region; and then come plans etc. to reach it with full understanding and with all instruments necessary to smoothen the path of obstruction, he might happen to meet with in the outer world. The *Ramayana* gives us some idea of the way the teachers in the post-Vedic times led their students: 'Sruti (the knowledge) observing that her audience did not grasp what she first explained, even though they felt, owing to the undeveloped state of their intellect, felt dejected and helpless. She then took to the method of explaining to them in a slightly different style without directly touching upon the Self. She spoke about the useful matters to be accomplished, pointing out their means and effects. Good and evil were explained as also the nature of elements and their products. She explained what is Logic and what are the Sastras (sciences). Definitions of technical terms and their meanings were then furnished' (*Sundarakanda*, II: 43). Thus they explore the dynamic personality. Everything is there, within the person; and so it is the injunction of the Upanishads to all: 'What is within, it should be sought' (*Chand. Up.*, VIII: 1. 2). This alone is 'to be seen i.e. intuited, to be heard, to be thought of, and continually to be concentrated upon' (*Brihad. Up.*, II: 4-5).

The whole structure of teaching in ancient India was based on this; and without a thorough knowledge of this

first cause other subjects are of no use. No Dogma has a place, neither blind belief has room; every method adopted in this connection should aim at the unveiling of the personality of the individual (Cf. *Prasna. Up.*, I: The *Gita*, III: 29).

So to come to this knowledge, as we have seen elsewhere, the student has to pass through many preliminaries that make him peep into this Self either with consciousness or without it. The student, during earlier part of studies with his teacher, is taught to work with different projects that relate the worship and other sacred ceremonies. Through this it is said, there awakens in him curiosity—a spirit of observation and enquiry indispensable to those invisible regions which he will have to enter when the right comes.

The subjective sciences and the introspective consciousness are emphasized by the teacher more than anything else. These are to be taught and invoked in all students rather than taking them through merely the kindergarten system. The science of the Self is the foundation and guide of other subjects. An illustration is often given in this connection to remind us of the worthlessness and unimportance of objective subjects before one understands the foundation of all. Sveta-ketu, when reached his school age, his father calling him said: 'To keep up our family traditions go to a teacher for your studies and lead the life of studentship.' The boy goes to a teacher and spends twelve years of studentship and studies the Vedas and their allied subjects. He becomes an expert in all sciences and arts and is proud of his studies and comes home to exhibit his studies

before his father. The father sees in him a great egoism and wants to get rid of that; he asks him: 'My boy, I see you are very proud of your studies. Do tell me what have you learnt from your teacher. There is one thing that can be imparted by a teacher. Even those that cannot be heard, can be heard through this. That which cannot be argued can be argued. Which cannot be understood can be understood. Have you asked your teacher for that?' To the son this enquiry was rather a puzzle and he asks his father to narrate what this is. The father answers: 'Action is different from the cause; by knowing a clod of mud you could tell its source. In a similar way by knowing the cause of this world you could know everything that is around you. Knowledge of that One alone is the clue for all.' The boy tells his father: 'Father, if my teacher would have known this he could have told me.' Fearing that his father would send him back to the same teacher for this knowledge, he asks his father to reveal that science of all sciences. The father answers: 'My son, there is one knowledge by which one knows all things in the world. All

sciences speak of this. Bring a fruit and I will show you this.' He brings a fruit. The father asks him to break that. He does so. 'Do tell me what you see in this.' 'I see a seed in this.' 'Do break that as well.' He does so. 'Do tell me what you see in this.' 'I see nothing.' 'There are many things even in these and you cannot see them. There are subtle things which are invisible to you. From these subtle alone leaves, branches, and stem of a tree arise. From this nothing something is come out. It is something which cannot be expressed and all vital power of the world has come from this alone. Know this and you will know all other things. It is the source of all forms and names. You are That; this body is not you. Even you are the Jnata (Knower) that enjoys all.'

This teaching is a new revelation, as he never met with this in course of his studentship with the teacher. He is eager to know more about this and interrupts his father. He asks many questions and thus began to know the foundation of all knowledge, of all subjects, and of all sciences.

V. N. SHARMA

## THE HISTORY OF A SYMBOL

The following article is reproduced from the *London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, July, 1937, by kind permission of the Editor Dr. L. F. Church. Mrs. Rhys Davids, D.Litt., M.A., the well known Pali scholar and author of *What is the Original Gospel in Buddhism?*, *To Become or not to Become?*, *The Birth of Indian Psychology and its Development in Buddhism*, and other

works, traces here the history of the 'Wheel' in Buddhism. '... We see the "Wheel", she says, "as symbolizing the dynamic gospel, in which Gotama tried to transform the immanent God-consciousness of his day into the active life of man—transforming the Mantra "That art thou" into "That canst thou become, that thou shouldst and must become." —Ed.

I USE here the word symbol, not merely as one among many other figures or similes used to enhance the teaching of a religion, but in the more dominant sense in which the cross became the symbol of Christianity or the crescent that of Islam. It is admitted, at least in the learned world, that the cross has a pre-Christian history, and no less could be claimed for the pre-Islamic crescent. But I have yet to see any historic treatment given to the corresponding symbol—I might almost say, the twin symbol—of Buddhism: the road and its symbolic graph, the wheel. The status of a synbol may vary; it may rise in value; and it may fall without the religion it symbolizes falling, that is, perishing, with it. Its varied fortunes will depend on changing values within the religion with which it is associated. These two Buddhist figures, once held in real value, have had the curious fate, that the one, though weakened in truth and dignity, has remained honoured, while the other has lost all the value that it once had, that is, the value of pointing to a More in the teaching linked with it.

An interesting testimonial to this double fact was shown by Rudyard Kipling, writing of a deeper truth than he may have known about, in his attractive story, *Kim*. We most of us know the good old Tibetan lama, pilgrimaging to India, ever seeking the Way, while ever speaking with dread and repulsion of the Wheel. 'And they are all bound to the Wheel, said the lama, bound from one life to another. To none has the Way been shown.'

It is surely time we saw this matter in a better historical per-

spective than could the good lama or his gifted creator. I have done my little best to show such a perspective in the great collection of parables—all in a way symbols—contained in the Pali Canon: how we can see a gradual change in religious values dictating these, from the growing lotuses attending the birth of the Buddhist gospel, and the road or way belonging to its first utterance, and others dealing also with growth and progress, to the greater number with the monastic birthmark on them, pointing to ill and trouble and dread and fear of life. I would now take three of these similes that we find used in a bigger way, as symbolic of the teaching itself viewed as a unity, and seek in them an evolution in the ideas to which they bear witness.

Buddhism is, like another great world-religion, often referred to by those within and without alike, as a trinity, either a trinity of refuges (*sarana*) or—this later—a trinity of jewels (*ratana*). The three are Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha—teacher, doctrine, followers or church. Now these three find, once only in the Canon, symbolic representation as a threefold banner. The word is *dha'agga*: literally top of the flag, albeit I am not sure whether anything resembling our pennant or standard was meant. (Thus the Commentary says, that when it was struck, it emitted musical tones, suggesting bells.) The one *sutta* mentioning it is in the early portion of the third in the four chief collections (*nikaya*) of Sayings (it was long before these became writings or 'scripture'), viz. in the XIth chapter of the Verse-section (*Sakka-samyutta*). Sakka (or Indra), governor of the next



world, warring against the (?) preceding Iranian deities called Asuras (Ahura), exhorts his officers: Sirs, if you in the thick of battle are gripped by fear, terror, goose-skin of fright, just look up to the top of my banner and you will lose all fear. Or, if you don't, look up to the top of the banner of Prajapati, or of Varuna, or of Isana, and you will lose all fear. Just so, the Saying goes on—spoken, it is alleged, by the Founder Gotama—when a *samana*, a monk, alone in the depth of the forest is overcome by fear, terror, gooseflesh of fright, let him only think on the Teacher (*bhagava*), or if that suffices not, on Dhamma... or on the Sangha, and he will lose all fear.

Here, no less than in the Crescent, we have a common symbol for a corporate religion. It did not, however, as we say, 'catch on'; I have not met with the simile elsewhere, either in Saying, or in stone or other graphic shape. Nor can it be one that the first teachers will have so put into words. Why? Because the central object in their teaching appears to have been, at the close of the Founder's life, made clear and emphatic, in terms which clash with this idea of an ecclesiastical trinity. In these terms he resolved into a saving unity, not three notions, but two; the very two terms with which we find him beginning his public mission: these are *atta* (*atma*, the self, conceived as the indwelling Deity), and *dhamma* (*dharma*, the 'ought-to-be'), conscience or duty, conceived as inward monitor. 'Were it not better that you sought the Self?' and whoso longs for the great Self let him revere *dhamma*: so he began. 'Live as they who have the Self and Dhamma as lamp, as refuge,

and no other': so he ended. It is not likely that he will have commended both the trinity cited above and this duality—a duality maintained, as we see, from first to last, so that there cannot reasonably be raised the question, whether he expanded (?) his gospel from this to a trinity. We have but this to decide upon: which of the two, the duality or the trinity, is more truly the teaching of Gotama: the current teaching of seeking the Self, with the deepened conception of the Self in Dhamma, or the bidding of the growing monk-vogue, with its own peculiar values, in which Gotama was deified?

To return to the banner-symbol: I would have it noted, that when applied in the Saying quoted, it becomes just a word, a trinity of words: Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha. This is highly noteworthy, since I believe I am right in saying, that words, spoken words, and not any sort of graphic things, are Aryan India's oldest and most genuine symbols. I do not ignore the graphic symbols brought to light in the pre-Aryan Indus-valley excavations, but I find nothing surviving in India to form an unbroken continuation between these and the sculpture that seems no older than the third century B.C.<sup>1</sup> Till then India appears to have refused to spread her culture graphically for all to see, even in writing. For her a thing was only really impressive as long as it was alive. Cut in stone, painted in fresco, it stiffened into a dead thing, a fossil. It is true, that the Pitaka sayings refer to what seem to be frescoes: the painter (*chitta-kara*), with colours and panel or wall, fashioning shapes, but we have no

<sup>1</sup> When Greek influence became felt.

clear proof that such sayings dated from before the third century, the earliest date in which we hear of any sayings that can be traced to the Pitakas. Earlier India, to be aesthetically moved, needed movement, needed above all the living word, the 'divine word' (*daivi-vag*) as her teacher called speech.<sup>2</sup> I venture to think it has not been duly stressed, that the rock edicts of Asoka were not only for their messages highly interesting, but also for this, that they were a novelty in Indian culture, the very probable result of Greek influences, which broke in upon India nearly a century earlier led by Alexander the Great, or possibly by preceding expansion of commerce, the conqueror following the merchant. I say it all subject to correction, but I hold that for India the symbol lay in the spoken word. For the audible word was the man himself. In the word he revealed himself, he gave himself to the other man, to the world. That in silence, no less, was something divine would seem to have come later, conceived perhaps only when there had come a worsening of the word. Then only perhaps is it that we hear of 'the noble silence', refrain of the Pitakas; then only is it that we find the *muni* or seer, the Vedic meaning of which was the man under an urge, held to mean the silent one:

So I in silent study pondering  
shall to the silence of the seers  
attain,  
as glides great Ganga's river to the  
main.<sup>3</sup>

Even to-day the 'word' plays, in  
the thought of Buddhists concerning

their religion, a far greater part than does the symbol. No symbol amounts for them to as much as does the cross for Christians. *I think it might*; but, as I have hinted, this is because they have weakened the one chief symbol and perverted the other, as we saw in *Kim*. And both have been, as symbols, virtually discarded in favour of the Sitter, the crosslegged sitting 'Buddha-rupa', supreme type, *not* of the original Buddhism, but of the monastic ideal which superseded it, the image namely of the man conceived as done, finished in this life, in the utter calm of an ideal attained here.

Let us come to the weakening of the one symbol, that of the Road. We have here a very venerable notion: that of life as a whole being a way-faring here and further. The oldest word seems to have been *yana*, a going (the lengthened *o* to *go*). In the early Upanishads we find *pantha* used, a word that is rather path than road:

An ancient path that stretches far  
away

for me is touched, is found even by  
me;

by it the wise, the Brahma-knowers  
rise

and go hence to the bright world,  
thence higher yet set wholly free.

In the first utterance of the Buddhist gospel we come upon two other words: *patipada* or course, and *maggā* or road or way. And here the way no longer shares place of honour, as in the Upanishad, with another simile, the likening of the discarded body to the sloughed snake-skin; it has become the one, the central figure in this gospel message. Before the man lie ways, roads, that he can choose; he must use his will; he is the seeker,

<sup>2</sup> *Bṛihadaranyaka Upanishad*.

<sup>3</sup> *aham monena monissam. Psalms of the Brethren*, ver. 168. Pali Text Soc. ed.

the valuer, not the drifting log, the driven sheep. But he is given guidance. The road he should choose is the middle way between the active but uncurbed urge of the will and the over-regulated, over-disciplined will. And whither would this middle way lead him? Just whither his quest pointed; the quest of his Aim (*attha*). What was that?

It is not easy to render closely in English this word *attha* (Sanskrit *artha*). It is a corruption of the expanded root, *r*, the rolled *r*, which means reaching after, and also attaining. It is the wanting, and the seeking what is wanting. Or better than that: it is the valuing and the seeking of what is valued. It is perhaps not so well known as it should be, that in the word 'aim', we have a broken down form of value:— 'estimate' (*eimen, aesmer, aestimare*). Without wishing to force into a term of to-day a lost meaning, it may be conceded, that in 'aim' we have something wanted, not merely in the way of an animal instinct or impulse, but to be pursued with a synergy of the very man or self and his instruments, body and mind, in a word, pursued by man's will.

Now this aim or *attha* to which the middle way leads is not further defined save in terms of what I am compelled to see as a later inserted gloss, and to put on one side. It is clear by other *attha*-contexts in the Sayings, that the word once conveyed something not less clear than is to Christians the word 'salvation'. It did so at least to the closer followers of the teaching, and was often equated with man's 'good and happiness'. In the case of folk in general we find it distinguished from worldly aims as meaning, in Gotama's teaching,

'otherworldly aim' (*attha samparayiko*), a meaning which for Hinayana Buddhists and others is far too much lost to view.

And it is clear that no special definition of 'attha' is felt to be needed in that First Utterance, wherein one man, willing to help men to choose their highest welfare, is shown proposing to his friends, who are seeking to do no less a plan in outline whereby that help might best be given. It is true, that, in the current religious teaching, man's religious quest was not worded as 'attha.' It was 'atta', the Self, the God within, rather than the other very similar word. But it must be remembered that, in the Pali Canon of earlier and later Buddhist 'Sayings', we have a new, later literary diction in the so-called Pali, or 'Row' (of words), a diction only so-called when 'sayings' had begun to take linear shape as 'writings'. Language had in the interval been acquiring new terms for newly felt values. And it is worth noticing, in passing, that the shifting from the older object of the religious quest: *atta*, to the newer term: *attha* is betrayed in the inner circle of Buddhist disciples: 'Thus do worthy young men declare their winning of salvation: they speak of *attha* (the Aim) and don't bring in the *atta* (Self).'

It does not follow that, in the substituted 'Aim', the 'becoming Brahman' of the current teaching was utterly lost; but it is certain, that the emphasis in the religious quest had been shifted; shifted from the Goal of the aim to the long Between that lay before man in his 'way' thither—the 'between' of growth by living ever more worthily. It was Every-man now who had to live the 'God-

life': the *brahmachariya*, and not the young student only. That it was not on earth only that this aim had to be striven for is made clear by the qualifying term 'of other worlds' (*samparayika*), but it is equally clear that, with *attha* replacing *atta*, a personal conception of the Highest faded, giving way to the monastic ideal of riddance from life and the living being, as we yet comprehend these. The middle way remained, but it became the wayfaring that supremely mattered, mattered more than Way's End.

Yet I have said that the way or road, as representative symbol or figure, underwent weakening. What do I mean?

A Buddhist will never speak of the 'way' or 'path' (the word chosen by early translators); he will say 'the eightfold path'. The eight 'parts' (*atth' angika*) are so many ways of right thought, word, and deed: an inadequate medley, even from Buddhist point of view, into which I will not here go. My conviction is, from important evidence in a cluster of Sayings, that they were inserted to replace another earlier qualifying term which became obnoxious: *bhava* or becoming, a word which came to be used also for 'lives' and 'worlds'. These the monk-ideal viewed with repulsion. The 'way' was, for that ideal, to lead out from life; life became no more, as for the earlier India, a progress towards the fathers, the Gods, the One impersonal Deity. The prefix *bhava-* was transferred to the fellow-symbol of the Wheel. This thereby won in significance and force, but the Way, with its new padding of words, lost correspondingly. The wayfaring, the wayfarer became blurred. The Way went on faintly

reverberating down the centuries of exegesis, of the Wayfarer, the very man, self, soul, it came to be said:

Way there is, but goer exists not! So much more, for scholastic Buddhism, was the word the all-sufficing symbol, that he could, from his little inner world of the monastery, reduce life, for the earnest man, to a thing, not of golden opportunities, but something to be eradicated, and the 'way' to set a list of words indicating ideas about a human complex, whence the pith, the real man, was being ejected.

Let us deal further with the perverting of the twin symbol, the Wheel. What did I mean?

It is impossible to say, to what extent and when, the need of an impressive symbol made itself felt in the history of Buddhism. As a protestant movement so far as overworth in ritual met with its disapproval, it will have been long before recourse to temple-worship called forth architectural impressiveness. And for a considerable time the 'monastery' was but a settlement (*avasa*), consisting of a group of single cells or *viharas*, or a mountain cave. It may possibly have been when Buddhism began to flow over into other lands eastward, drawn it may be by the ancient culture of China seeking to learn 'the wisdom of the west', that the need of a credal 'banner' of some shape will have been felt. With such expansion the emperor Asoka has been too credulously credited, as I have tried to show. He, turning towards the west, whence came the meteoric partial conqueror of India, sent, not missionaries, but envoys, messengers (*duta*), seeking admission into the Hellenic comity of powers. But along the highway eastward through

central Asia von Le Coq took photographs of ruined temples, surmounted by great skeleton wheels, such as I have not seen in pictures of Indian monuments.

I have not seen any such survivals of a *Way made graphic*. And it is obvious, that a road does not lend itself to this. It is as word, as shibboleth, that the road survives in Buddhism. For the first disciples the Founder was emphatically the Man of the Road, and not the 'eightfold path'. 'Have you anyone like him?' his devoted kinsman and attendant was asked, after Gotama's decease. 'Nay', was the reply, 'we have not. For he made appear a road that had not appeared, he made us perceive a road not perceived, he declared a road not before declared...' But a road makes an ineffectual symbol; there could be but parallel lines, straight or spiral. Nor does the wayfarer make a simple distinctive self-explanatory figure, whether afoot or mounted. But on some auspicious day man had bethought him of placing beneath his mount a rolling ball, flattened, then skeletonized. He had invented the wheel. And so long as wheel and way formed an ever recurring tangent, there was progress, attainment.

Of these the wheel, symbol of symbol, had been representative before the birth of Buddhism. It was the symbol of conquest, the conquering king being known as leading his army after the mystic wheel rolling on before. It was legendary when the Pali Sayings were taking standardized shape, and the king himself was termed 'wheel-turner' (*chakravartin*). I do not wish to exaggerate its antiquity, for I do not find any such legend as is cited in those

sayings in pre-Buddhist literature.<sup>4</sup> Rhys Davids indeed seems to have considered the picturesque account in the Digha Suttanta a 'fairy tale', invented to introduce the loftier alternative of a wheel not of conquest, but of God (Brahma), or of the Ideal (Dharma), turned by a world-helper. This I do not accept, because the wheel-turner was so far from being a special creation, that it formed part of the esoteric lore of augurs, in interpreting birthmarks. Thus, on the soles of certain babies, who were destined for conquest or for Messiahship, there would be the finished impress of a wheel with spokes.

For the 'Messiah' his task would lie in rolling back further the veil of the unseen shrouding man's nature, life and destiny. Here is how pious poetry showed such a man speaking:

By dharma do I turn the wheel,  
the wheel that may not be turned  
back.

Who like thee turns this wheel of  
dharma peerless?

Sariputta like me turns the wheel,  
wayfarer's worthy son.

And again:

For deva-worlds as for the worlds  
of men

he, the wayfarer, turned the wheel  
of God,

and other contexts from the Pitakas might be quoted.

Here then, albeit yet in word only, we see the wheel as symbolizing the dynamic gospel, in which Gotama tried to transform the immanent God-consciousness of his day into the

<sup>4</sup> A *chakravartin* finds mention in the Mahabharata, but that epic covers a long literary period. Readers will find the legend and its Buddhist application in *Dialogues of the Buddha*, S.B. Buddhists, Vol. iii, No. XXVI.

active life of man—transforming the mantra 'That art thou' into 'That canst thou become, that thou shouldst and must become'.

That we have above words actually spoken, as spoken, by the Founder I would not say. The rhetoric put into his mouth will have been the pious inventions of cloistered students of a later date. For me those first 'sons of the Sakyas, as they called themselves, will have been far too much absorbed in teaching the real meaning of the way or road, to have sat spinning verses about its symbol, the wheel. In so far as a symbol is more than an esoteric sign, stumbled on as it were by chance, it will be a thing of slow growth. A simile, a parable is spoken to a listening group, or to one hearer alone. Easily remembered, it is repeated in teaching and finally canonized. But the symbol is something pointing to an already organized institution, the growth of many generations. We might better compare the ways of a Sakyan missionary with those of an officer, sending out an outpost or vedette, with orders which would bear no reference to the colours, or what they stood for.

Some may say: Did not Jesus refer to a taking up the cross and following Him, before He suffered? Possibly the words are a true memory. But was the sight of a condemned man bearing his cross so unknown in those days in Palestine? 'Consider the lilies, how they grow!' he said. But may he not also have said: 'Look at yon man carrying his cross! Do you take up what may bring pain to you too in these days?' Nor is even the seen simile a necessary assumption. When men by man were tortured baited, or burnt, language gained

correspondingly, as our Shakespeare plays testify:

...upon the rack of this rough world stretch him out longer.

We are at the stake  
(and bayed about with many  
enemics.)

I will die in the opinion at the stake. In just these ways may Jesus have referred to the cross, or, for that matter, Gotama to a road, or to a wheel as indicating progress and attainment. Neither will have meant a 'church' emblem. The figures used are none the less characteristic for that. Jesus, it is said, left 'joy, his joy' with His followers, but He also left with them acceptance of suffering and growth by suffering:—'a cross'. Gotama is made to rebel against suffering, but he also taught, in and through life (that is, lives), the need of growth or becoming That Who we truly, potentially, are:—'wayfaring.'

In the sixth century B.C. in India this meant ever an adventure, whether the traveller was a king out for conquest, or a merchant escorting his caravan, let alone the unarmed 'wanderer' or student seeking this or that teacher. Gotama's clan was not, then at least, associated with war, of defence or offence. But as the son of a highland raja or laird—it was nothing more—in Nepal, he will have seen many a caravan arriving and departing; he may have assisted his father at the pricing of imported wares, of which Indian books speak. He seems to have had 'Wanderlust', in his own venture in travel. And anyway, somehow he became in simile linked with the caravan. Poetry addressed him as *sattavaha*, a word in which I would rather see, not 'master-bringer', but *sa-attha-vaha*:

bringer with the goods, the gains (*attha* was ever an elastic word).

Arise, thou hero, victor in the fight,  
Thou owing none, lord of the caravan.

And the title was in later poems bestowed on other 'Buddhas'. The great corpus of Jataka or 'birth' stories starts with two stories of caravan leaders. And in their lives as touring missionaries most of the year, the Sakyans, with a charter bidding them 'Wayfare with a way-faring for the good, the happiness of devas and of men', were given little chance to overlook so central a feature as was Way—the God-way—and the Wheel—wheel of the Better, the Right. Both the one and the other were figures of the new, the more dynamic gospel which, teaching both the divine goal and the reality and potency of the man, the very self, held that the man's very nature was not a being but a becoming. However much, and positively the after-men damned the word 'becoming', seeing in it no longer spiritual growth, but mere bodily and mental rebirth as so much vain repetition, they never ceased to enjoin exercises for the purpose of that spiritual growth. They evaded the word 'becoming' by using more and more the causative form of the verb: i.e. 'make-become', and 'making-become', a verbal noun now mistranslated as 'meditation' (*bhavana*).

But with this tragic difference. Man, the 'becomer', was not to make *himself* become, expanding his divine potency; he was to make this and that idea become, this and that quality, qualities where the 'substance', to speak in the classic way, had been

dropped out. First the Divine in man was dropped—did it not belong to the brahmanic teaching between which and maturing 'Buddhism' the rift was ever widening?—then the man himself was dropped out—was 'he', who could not be really 'got at', anything more than fleeting moments in a mere complex? Thus this strenuous and persistent endeavour in 'making become', which fills so many pages of Sayings, is no more for the purpose of actualizing in Godhead a divine potential in the very man; it is, so to hyperstimulate the growth both of virtue and yet of world-detachment in body and mind, that at death these would crumble (*pahujjati*) to nothing, all force for vital renewal used up.

The *samana* or 'monk'—our nearest equivalent—had 'gone forth' from the 'world', as a life not worth living. The psychic teaching of his Founder had shown him a world where even well-doing was requited by a life in which enjoyment was, not less than on earth, a matter of mere bodily and mental enjoyment, ending also in collapse and dying. The 'ill' of all such life, as a bigger thing than its joys, had gripped him so tightly, that a doctor-gospel to end old age, illness and dying seemed the one thing worth following. It was no longer a Way 'on' that he wanted; it was a way 'out' (*nissarana*); and such a doctor-gospel he thrust on to the shoulders of his revered Master. This materialistic conception of ill blotted out the real nature of the 'man' and his nobler quest.

With that the original symbolism in Way and Wheel was lost. I have dealt with the former; and only add the reminder, that in three notable conversations with laymen in the

Sayings: with Visakha and Anathapindika, wealthy and devout patrons, and with Sigala, the young dissenter, no word of the Way is said. The second, on his deathbed hears of it and protests at its being kept, as teaching, for the Order.

The Wheel, in its truer sense still surviving as the title of the very first Utterance: 'the Saying on the Turning the Wheel of the Right,' became severed from the Road it symbolized, where by the healthy friction of life it found tangent and progress. It became linked with the notion of the futility of life; a suspended wheel uselessly revolving as wheel in squirrel's cage, or wheel of poor bound Ixion. The great word *bhava*: becoming, *Werden*, linked may be, to it at first, in its original meaning, came to signify merely 'lives', 'worlds', no more viewed as precious opportunities—a view surviving only in the Jataka, the life-stories of the spiritual evolution of the Founder—but only as so much tiresome repetition. And we get finally a picture of the debased wheel in the nihilistic exegesis of Buddhaghosa of the fifth century A.D.: ... 'this wheel of *bhava* moving in its twelve parts by cause and effect without known beginning, an eddy of residual vices, actions and results, itself and its parts empty... keeps rolling without a break.' The 'parts' are the links in the monastic invention known as the Causal Uprising, a borrowing of the cultural vogue in mental causation to explain the growth, not of wellbeing, but of misery. It is of interest that, whenever and by whomsoever Buddhism found its way to Tibet, the form it there took made the Wheel, so divided, its centre. Herein *Kim* is a true echo, and readers may have seen

samples of these wheel-pictures, the whole picture held up by a great grinning devil. And the question arises whether those ruined temple-wheels referred to above were not wheels of this later pessimistic teaching rather than the original symbols of a great hope in life.

Yet even to the causal wheel of ill I have come across a medieval reference in a hopeful vein. This is in the work entitled *Divyavadana*: the 'divine legend', brought as palmleaf MS. by Brain Hodgson from Nepal last century, and edited in roman letter by Cowell, to be, I trust, translated before long. In it the 'Buddha' is made to instruct Ananda to set up such a wheel over the gate of the monastery at Rajgir (the mother settlement of Buddhism), and then show all comers what, as depicted, the psychic disciple Moggallana had seen and heard as to life in the worlds. There were to be five spokes of the five destinies: hells, animals, pretas (or intermittent purgatorials), men and devas (i.e. worthy men reborn elsewhere). In the middle a dove, a serpent and a pig were to symbolize lust, hate, and bewilderment. Survival was to be pictured by water falling, as in a mill-wheel, on to the wheel. At bottom a monk explaining matters.

A dreary picture, wholly of a Less in life, with no outlook towards a More. And yet, *mirabile dictu*! we read elsewhere in the book this line:

*Bhagava, cakra-svastika-nandy-avarta!*

'The master, bringer of the luck and joy of the wheel!'

Truly eclecticism can be a wonderful dawner, patching together in the later days things so far apart as this



wheel of misery and the joy and good luck that lay in the wayfaring wheel of the Indian saviour's teaching.

More light may come to us on the medieval symbolism of Wheel and Way than I have found it possible to give here. I am seeking to place a translation of the *Divyavadana* ;

that of another large medieval anthology, the *Mahavastu*, is well advanced in the hands of my friend, J. J. Jones, of the National Library of Wales. Here I have but shown that these symbols also have their history.

(MRS.) C. A. F. RHYS DAVIDS

## SPIRITUAL COUNSELS

The following paragraphs are from the notes of **Swami Yatiswarananda's** class talks in Germany, given in December, 1933.—Ed.

### I

ALL the Great Teachers are still there on the mental plane. According to their tendencies the devotees get the vision of them. As you know, Swami Vivekananda saw Buddha when he was yet a boy, and became terribly afraid. In later years he was sorry for that.

### II

On the birthdays of all the Great Ones we should devote more time to recollection and meditation and prayer, and avoid all outer distractions all the more. They should not be days of outward festivities and social rejoicings, but of quiet withdrawal into our own innermost soul where we can find them always if we are able to reach their plane of consciousness. Do not think they are gone. No. They exist now as they existed in the past, as they existed in their life-time. So everybody who is sincere and learns how to raise his consciousness, withdrawing it from the physical, and how to fix it on them and their ideal, can come in

touch with them and be in their company. Do not think Christ merely lived two thousand years ago. Do not think Buddha is dead and gone.

### III

Sankara has said, 'Let the Buddha in me awake!' Similarly we may pray, 'May the Christ in us awake. May we realize the ideal for which He stood, the ideal for which He laid down His life, the ideal of all the Great Ones. May there be illumination, peace, and good will on earth and among men.' May Christmas mean the birth of the Christ in us, not only a social function, and not only even the mere remembrance of His physical birth.

### IV

Christmas has become a social function in Christian society. It is not Christ's birth that is actually being celebrated. It has become a social custom today—the occasion for worldly festivities.

Without caring for the greatest thing in life we continually busy ourselves with the ephemeral things of the world—instead of busying with which

is, has been, and will be for all time to come. Let us ponder deeply over the unfalsified teachings of Christ. Let us go to Him and not to His interpreters. Let us listen to His voice and pray to Him to grant us the capacity to understand His eternal teaching. Let His Birthday be our birthday, the birthday of our reality, doing away with all the encrustations and superimpositions which veil our true nature and prevent us from reaching the light which has been ours since time immemorial. May His grace and the grace of all the Great Ones descend upon us and illumine our understanding and heart. May this birthday of Christ awaken in us the true yearning for the higher life and give us the strength to follow Him and to reach Him.

## VI

In the beginning of our spiritual life we may think God is separate from ourselves, and we are all separate from one another. As the result of our moral and ethical discipline, when we are really able to chasten ourselves, we find that we are part of Him, we all form the different parts of a mighty organism. When our mind is further purified, we come to feel that in our true spiritual nature freed from the limiting adjuncts we are eternally one with God, that our individuality and personality is a myth, and become merged in the One Undivided Principle, the One without a second, the **THAT** of the Upanishads, the 'I and my Father are one' of Christ. This is the ultimate consummation of all spiritual striving and Sadhana.

## VII

'God has so created the senses that they go outward, and man sees

only the external world, and not the Self.'

It is only the wise person who turns his mind and senses inward. Unless we are prepared to rise above the temptations of the senses, it is not possible for us to lead a really spiritual life. The senses must not be given food, they have to be curbed. Unless we are able to rid ourselves of the temptations presented to our mind by the senses, unless we are able to achieve the control of this unruly mind, it is not possible truly to turn to the Divine and make Him the pivot of our life.

## VIII

Nachiketas went to Yama and asked him the most difficult question, namely, 'What was Truth?' Yama answered: 'Choose sons and grandsons who shall live a hundred years, herds of cattle, elephants, horses, and gold; choose a vast territory on earth, and live thyself as many years as thou desirest. Ask for some other boon that thou thinkest equal to this, such as wealth and long life. O Nachiketas, be a king of the wide earth. I will make thee the enjoyer of all desires. Whatever objects of desires are difficult to get in this world of mortals, doest thou ask for them all according to thy choice;—these fair damsels with their chariots and musical instruments—such indeed are not obtainable by man; be thou attended on by them whom I bestow upon thee. But ask not anything about Truth.'

And then came the beautiful answer of Nachiketas which proves him to have been a real devotee: 'All those are most transient, O Yama they wear out all sense-vigour of the mortal. Moreover all lives are short indeed. So keep thy horses,

dance, and song for thyself. Tell me, O Yama, that, that Supreme Life of hereafter in which they have doubt. Nothing shall Nachiketas choose other than that goal which is so mysterious.'

And after having tested him thus, Yama proceeded to instruct him in the highest knowledge.

### IX

We find temptation in the lives of all the Great Ones. By this they have shown us how to overcome temptation and how to follow the path. They themselves did not need any temptation, but without being shown practically the possibility of overcoming all temptation we should have said that this was impossible and that their case was different.

Especially during our meditation our desires become very vivid, take a terribly definite shape. So do our attachments. It is a severe test that comes to all of us without any exception. So our attitude should be that of Nachiketas. During the moment of our temptation we should say, 'O Lord, keep me away from all these temptations. I do not want them.' Physical temptations are nothing compared with mental temptations. The finer our world becomes, the more sensitive we grow, the greater the struggle. So the thoughts of the different Great Ones and of their attitude should give us greater and greater strength to fight the battle successfully. Hence when sitting for meditation always send salutations to them.

### X

There are two different states, the state of the aspirant and the state of the perfect man. Of the first Sankara says, 'He avoids the company of

people, looking upon them as poisonous serpents. Even the most beautiful form he looks upon as a dead body, and objects of sense-enjoyment he avoids as poison.' This is in the beginning when the aspirant wants to lead a pure life without having overcome his passions and desires. But when he himself has realized Truth, all this sense of hatred and aversion passes away. So Sankara says, 'The whole world has become to him like a Divine pleasure garden. All trees appear to him to be the wish-yielding trees in heaven. All waters appear to him as the holy Ganges water. All acts become to him consecrated acts. All sounds, whether gross or refined, good or bad, become to him the Vedic sound. The whole world becomes to him the holy city of Benares. Such becomes the vision of him who has realized the Truth, who has known Brahman.' Then all fear of temptation has left him. At that stage he has gone beyond its sway.

But these two stages should be clearly separated. First we must make use of the staircase, and only afterwards, when we ourselves have reached the terrace can we look down upon the staircase as something very small compared with the terrace and its amenities.

### XI

We must have dispassion for all enjoyments procurable in this life and in future lives. We must be able to discriminate between what is eternal and unchanging and what is transitory and fraught with pain and danger. We must come to possess the six ethical virtues: Tranquillity of mind, restraint of the senses, renunciation of desires, endurance,

placidity of mind, and faith. And lastly we must possess a burning desire for liberation from the trammels of nature. This means we must have a tremendous yearning for the Truth.

## XII

Learn to see things as they are. Everywhere on the phenomenal plane you find filth and flowers side by side. They are eternally inseparable so long as we do not go beyond the plane of manifestation, which is the plane of the pairs of opposites. During the time of your early Sadhana create a disgust for the world and its expression through these pairs of opposites.

## XIII

The first step towards a realization of God is to see in this body the greatest temple of the Divine. You must throw away all the filth you have stored up during innumerable years, and above all you must see that you do not allow your mind to accumulate any new filth.

'There are various holy things, holy waters, holy mountains, temples, and the like, but the heart of the devotee is the greatest temple. It takes years for us to be purified by the holy waters etc., but the truly holy man purifies us in no time. And it is he who makes the holy places holier and makes our Scriptures embody his experiences and give inspiration for us.'

Only when the aspirant realizes Him in the very depths of his own being, he realizes Him in all. The human body is the greatest temple of God, for in it we have to realize Him.

'All dependence on externals is misery. Dependence on the Self alone is Bliss.'

Childhood has to be outgrown. And if we remain children all our life, we cannot be children in the higher sense. We should possess the purity of a child, but not a child's ignorance.

## XIV

You must learn to touch the mind at the right point. You cannot get milk from the cow if you do not know how to milk it. You must become expert milkers if you want to get the greatest quantity of milk.

The Mind has many compartments. Some of them you must lock up carefully, and then set fire to them. Other compartments must be unlocked; but finally you must set fire to them also; for Truth is beyond both.

## XV

Spiritual Life does not mean passing over a bed of roses. The soul's path is not a path strewn with beautiful fragrant flowers. We must never be afraid of tremendous struggle. Spiritual Life means this, but then there is pleasure in weathering the storm, there is pleasure in struggling. You get greater strength, greater steadiness, and greater knowledge.

Swami Vivekananda used to say, 'Constant struggle is a form of worship to the Lord. Repeated defeats should not unnerve thee. Let all thy hankerings, all thy desires be reduced to dust: Make thy heart a cremation-ground, and let the MOTHER dance there. God comes only when the heart is pure. Let the MOTHER dance there.'

Without morals spiritual life cannot be begun. And the higher forms of love must uproot our sense-bound affections for human dolls and create the right outlook which, in its turn,

gives us great sympathy and insight and the true spirit of sacrifice. Once this new outlook has become alive in us, there is no more danger from human dolls and affections that are time-bound and create fetters and dungeons for ourselves as well as for others. The very moment Love comes into our heart, all counterfeits of Love vanish.

## XVI

The morning is the best time for the spiritual practices, especially meditation—immediately after we get up from bed. Always the early morning is the best time; but then, we should practise Japa and meditate at least for a few minutes in the evening too, when dusk is falling. If we have time enough, it is good to perform our practices at the time of the four junctions of the day, *i.e.* at dawn, midday, nightfall, and midnight, because they mean a change in the current and in the vibrations. If we cannot do so much, we should at least stick to the early morning and night-fall practices.

How many times do we eat during the day? So if we can find time enough for our meals, what about our spiritual food? Is it less important? The early morning is the best time, because sleep, in a way, has cut us off from our memory.

## XVII

The general rule is: Practise rhythmic breathing, because breath acts on the mind, just as the mind acts on breath. The breath becomes very much attenuated during Japa. Whenever the mind is really concentrated, breath is minimized. This is a great sign by which to measure the

stage of concentration we have attained.

## XVIII

We in our true nature are not products of Maya, but unchangeable spiritual entities. Man is a spiritual entity, not a body or a mind or a combination of both. Man is eternally beyond Maya, and only for this reason is there any hope of salvation.

## XIX

Such is our inordinate and blind clinging to this body of ours that we are only busy with the pleasures of the body.

We undergo the miseries of life, repeat the bitter experiences again and again; but all this does not make us wiser in any way. We are continually running after the mirage to quench our thirst with its waters, but this can never be done.

‘As a lamp in a spot sheltered from the wind does not flicker, even such has been the simile used for a Yogi of subdued mind, practising concentration on thy Self.’

‘When the mind, absolutely restrained by the practice of concentration, attained quietude, and when seeing the Self by the self, one is satisfied in his own Self: when he feels that infinite bliss—which perceived by the purified intellect and which transcends the senses, and established wherein he never departs from his real state; and having obtained which, regards no other acquisition superior to that, and where established, he is not moved even by heavy sorrow;—let that be known as the state, called by the name of Yoga,—a state of severance from the contact of pain. This Yoga should be practised with perseverance, undisturbed by depression of heart.’

'With the intellect set in patience, with the mind fastened on the Self, let him attain quietude by degrees: let him not think of anything.'

'Through whatever reason the restless, unsteady mind wanders away, let him, curbing it from that, bring it under the subjugation of the Self alone.'

'Verily, supreme bliss comes to that Yogin of perfectly tranquil mind, with passions quieted, Brahman-become, and freed from taint.'

'The Yogin freed from taint of good and evil, constantly engaging the mind thus, with ease he attains the infinite bliss of contact with Brahman.'

## XX

Slowly, steadily, build up your meditation with great purity of heart. The mind must be fixed on the Self. The mind must be made steady and unflickering. Very often we imagine that if a certain desire were satisfied, it would leave us, but the truth is that every time a desire is satisfied it becomes stronger. You cannot really satisfy any desire. Desire, as such, refuses to be satisfied and only begins to clamour all the more, the more you try to satisfy it.

'Verily this desire for enjoyment never becomes satisfied through enjoyment. The desires go on increasing and become more and more intense as is the case of the fire when clarified butter is poured into it.'

If this be the truth, we must cry halt somewhere and turn the mind wholly to truth.

'This body is full of filth and dirt and contains thousands of worms, really it is so repulsive when you think of it, so foul.' Learn to face the truth. Those who are ignorant

find pleasure in it, but not the wise. Even if you feel repulsed by such ideas you must have the strength and capacity to face this truth. Is there anything truer than that? Can you ever keep the body clean? Make use of this body for higher purposes. Do not neglect it, but, at the same time, know its true nature. We all should make use of this life that is given us for higher purposes.

True discontent must be created, because true discontent is the beginning of spiritual life.

We only look at the outward beauty which is but skin-deep. We forget the spirit and think that this beauty belongs to the body. It is just one aspect of Maya. It is all a question of separating what is true from what is false, a question of dispassion and discrimination and sober judgment. The spirit has been caught in the net of matter. Reality and unreality have become mixed up, and it is the task of the spiritual aspirant to separate the Real from the unreal.

## XXI

The Reality, the Truth, the Atman, has to be realized—as the Upanishads say. 'If a man attains It here, then he reaches the goal of life. If he does not realize It here, then he passes through the miseries of births and deaths. The wise, having realized the Atman in themselves and in all beings, attain to Immortality and Peace.'

In Vedanta you must first of all create terrible dispassion in yourself and then turn the mind from the unreal to the Real. This world itself is a prison-house and this body of ours is a terrible dark cell in this prison. So the task of life is to light

the cell with the Divine Light, and, after that, to break the cell and the prison and become free.

## XXII

The spiritual aspirant should always be bold enough to face Truth as It is. It is very grim, very painful, but in the long run Truth brings light and annihilates all pain.

We should endeavour to attain to the Highest in this life before we die.

'The fire of Knowledge burns away all our Karma, all our sins; it burns them to ashes.'

'But then we must allow the Divine to burn all this Karma, instead of constantly creating new ones.'

'All doubts are removed, all the knots of the heart are rent asunder, all Karma is burnt away, when Truth is known.'

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**The Inductive Conception of Life:**  
By PROFESSOR ENZO LOLLI. TRANSLATED (INTO ENGLISH) BY H. A. KENNEDY, B.A. PUBLISHED BY RIDER & CO., PATERNOSTER HOUSE, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C. 4. PRICE NET 4 sh. 6 d.

The general nature of the philosophic theory of Professor Enzo Lolli and its particular application to the problem of life, as explained in the present book, can be appreciated only after understanding the principle of 'Inductive energy' centrally propounded in it. The word 'induction' here has the same signification as in Electricity and Magnetism. This new theory comes as a shock to the conception of man's supreme individual importance in the universe as held by philosophers like Hegel, Nietzsche, and Descartes. For the author contends, 'Man is not the master of Nature: he is an integral part of it. The knowledge of certain natural laws gives him, perhaps, the ability to regulate himself better,... Neither he nor his mind is the centre of the universe. Both are mere radiations, individualized in him, sometimes in a strange manner. The greatest of the great is but a reflection of the divine, universal energy, which is perhaps more evident in him than in millions of other individuals, but which is nevertheless an energy of the same nature as that which is in others. This being thus, pride in man is neither more efficacious nor less ridiculous than it might appear in an ant

in its ant-hill to a man looking at it.' Recognition of this fact, however, does not warrant a pessimistic conclusion. The present theory gives a conception of life which exalts the intelligence of man, reveals all his possibilities and shows the way to their fulfilment.

It is interesting to note in this connection how Indian thought which emphasizes one supreme Intelligent-force manifesting as the variegated universe offers a parallel to the present theory. Instead of giving room for the conceit that man is all in all in the universe, it rightly emphasizes the potential greatness of man as identical with that one Supreme Source.

The book is constructed in eleven chapters divided into two parts. The first part, constituting of two chapters, sets forth succinctly the meaning of the term 'induction', the purpose and the special features of the theory, and its advantages over the philosophic theories of Hegel, Nietzsche, Descartes, and the rest. In so far as the view that the only certain reality for man is his thought, the author does not differ from his predecessors. He posits the existence of 'Something' which is other than thought itself. He has maintained that the thought of man is only a part of the energy radiated by the universe, or rather by God.

The second part, consisting of nine chapters, is devoted to the inductive solution of the problem of life. By life is understood, according to Professor Enzo Lolli, 'those manifestations of "Some-

thing" which take place in a being endowed with intrinsic and autonomous movement.' Life, in this light, is a phenomenon recognisable through the rhythmic movement perceptible in the organism. Inductive energy, which, according to the author, forms the basis of life, manifests in individuals through an unknown means of propagation which is here designated as 'neural radiations'.

Elucidatory facts and experimental evidences adduced wherever necessary impart

to the book authority and attractiveness. The publishers notices in the blurb that this forms the first of two distinguished books on Psychology by the Italian Professor, Enzo Lolli, and we hope that the translation of the second, bigger volume, *The Irradiation of Life and Thought*, will throw further light on the problem of life dealt with in this book and others allied with it. The printing and get up of the book is worthy of the reputation of the firm.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Swami Karunanandaji Maharaj Passes Away.

Swami Karunananda was born at Munshiganj, Dacca. He joined the Ramakrishna Order in 1903 as a worker of the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares. Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj initiated him into Sannyasa in 1911. For many years Swami Karunananda practised spiritual discipline in the Himalayas and performed extensive pilgrimages. He started an Ashram at Kishanpur, five miles away from Dehra Doon. He had been also one among the band of the Mission workers who brought succour to victims of plague, famine, fire, etc. on many occasions. On Saturday, the second November, he gave up the body at the age of sixty. For about two years he was suffering from Tuberculosis. May his soul rest in that Peace which was the quest of his life. Om Santih; Om Santih; Om Santih.

### The Ramakrishna Mission Sister Nivedita Girls' School and Sarada Mandir, Baghbar, Calcutta

#### Report for the Years 1930 to 1939

We gladly welcome the first Report of the above Institution which aims to fulfill the educational needs of women on the ideal set out by the great Swami Vivekananda and his illustrious disciple Sister Nivedita. The late Sister Nivedita—Miss Margaret Noble—after whom the School is named was an ardent European disciple of the great Swamiji. She dedicated her whole life with great zeal and devotion to the Swamiji's appeal for the service of Indian Womanhood. Early in 1898, she

started a Kindergarten school, in a small house at 16, Bosepara Lane, Baghbar, Calcutta, for girls in a tentative way, which she hoped gradually to expand and develop into a real nation-building activity, reaching the heart of the nation through its daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers. She readily absorbed Swami Vivekananda's teachings in this respect and added to them many valuable elements derived from her own knowledge and experience as a teacher and social worker of vigorous, independent views. Later, she was assisted in her work by an American disciple of Swamiji, the late Sister Christine, who had come to this country early in 1902. The two sisters struggled hard in expanding the Institution and placing it on a solid basis. After the passing away of Sister Nivedita in 1911, the Institution had to experience many vicissitudes. Though Sister Christine was there to continue the work left by her colleague, she was unavoidably detained in U.S.A. for several years at a stretch. Then it was efficiently managed by Miss Sudhira Bose, one of the earliest trained pupils of the Sisters. Unfortunately Miss Bose too died prematurely in 1920. Sister Christine returned to India to resume her work but her ill health compelled her to go back again. She died on the 27th March, 1930, in New York. A brief description of the School follows.

(1) *Management.* The Management of the School had been formerly in the hands of a group of four persons appointed by the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission. From August, 1935, it is entrusted to a local Managing Committee



appointed by the Mission. (2) *Teaching Staff*. In the year 1939, there were twenty lady teachers in the Staff of whom one was an M.A., one a B.T., three graduates, three undergraduates, three senior trained teachers, three Matriculated teachers, and six others though not passed in any examination yet well experienced in their work. Of these twenty, ten are paid and the rest honorary teachers. The School meets the bare maintenance of the latter. (3) *The Curriculum*. The Report gives a brief account of the Kindergarten methods worked out in the infant and primary sections, and the curriculum followed in other classes leading upto the Matriculation Standard. There are altogether 18 classes and the minimum period to finish the course is 10 years. It can be said summarily that a great deal of oral training enters into the prescribed course of study. The subjects taught in the School are: Bengali, English, Sanskrit, History, Geography, Arithmetic, Geometry, Elementary Hygiene, Nature Study, Science, Paper-cutting, Chalk and pencil drawing, Sewing, and others.

Of these some subjects are taught only in lower Classes, while others are taught throughout the course, in various stages, from elementary to advanced studies. High School standard of teaching is followed in Classes VII to X. The study of Sanskrit is compulsory from Classes VI to X. Sewing and needle-work are also compulsory from the Infant Class to Class X. Attention is paid to select such text books as may inspire the girls with lofty ideals of their religion and culture. Three examinations are conducted in a year; prizes and scholarships are awarded to the meritorious students every year. During the period of five years, from 1934-1939, 34 students passed the Matriculation Examination. (4) *The Library and Reading-room*. The Library had 2,445 books at the end of the year 1939. It received two dailies (one English and the other Bengali), four English, and eight Bengali, monthlies; two papers were exclusively for the children. It is interesting to note that the Library contained 254 English books and 300 Bengali books for children only.

The recurring expenses of the Institution are met from the interests of the Perma-

nent and Prize Endowment Funds, grant from the Corporation of Calcutta, sale proceeds of Sister Nivedita's works, house rent, and public subscriptions and donations. Details of the investment of the Funds and audited annual accounts from the year 1930 to 1939 are incorporated in the Report. The total receipts and expenditure for the period under review, according to the statement of audited and consolidated accounts were Rs. 1,01,482-2-4 and Rs. 99,445-0-8 and those for the year 1939 only were Rs. 11,500-15-5 and Rs. 9,473-13-9. The School celebrated the Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna in February 1936. Every year the School celebrated Sarasvati Puja. Yearly prizes were distributed to students as a mark of recognition of merit in different subjects, and Nivedita Scholarships were awarded every year beginning from 1937.

#### THE SARADA MANDIR

The ideal of the Mandir is to train women to live a life of renunciation and service, under the inspiration of the Ideal Life of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother. It was started in the year 1914 by Sister Sudhira and is now located on the third storey of the Nivedita School buildings. The Mandir serves as a residential boarding-house for those students of the School who have to live away from their parents. During the year 1939 there were 47 inmates—10 honorary workers of the School, 32 paying boarders, and 5 free and half-free boarders. The boarders receive training congenial to Indian Culture and traditions. The inmates, excluding the boarders, are maintained from the interest of the Permanent Endowments and from the School. Religious classes and discourses on various scriptures were conducted. In the years under consideration 7 inmates passed Degree Examinations, five I.A., and two B.A. Audited annual accounts from the year 1930 to 1939 are included in the Report. The total receipts and expenditure for the period, according to the audited consolidated accounts, were Rs. 46,205-13-3 and Rs. 46,005-13-3, and those for the year 1939 only were Rs. 5,424-14-0 and Rs. 5,224-14-0 respectively. There is need and scope for expansion of work in the School and the Mandir for which the Institution appeals for further funds.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOLUME XXVII



NUMBER 9

JANUARY, 1941.

---

## LET ME ABIDE WITH THEE

‘ Quiet, Lord, my froward heart;  
    Make me teachable and mild,  
· Upright, simple, free from art;  
    Make me as a little child:  
From distrust and envy free,  
Pleased with all that pleases Thee.

· What Thou shalt to-day provide.  
    Let me as a child receive;  
What to-morrow may betide,  
    Calmly to Thy wisdom leave;  
’Tis enough that Thou wilt care:  
Why should I the burden bear?

· As a little child relies  
    On a care beyond his own,  
Knows he’s neither strong nor wise,  
    Fears to stir a step alone:  
Let me thus with Thee abide,  
As my Father, Guard, and Guide.’

JOHN NEWTON (1725-1807)

## A RELIGION RELEVANT TO OUR NEEDS

### I

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA was born on the twelfth of January seventy-eight years ago. According to the Hindu calendar his birthday falls this year on the nineteenth of that month. The occasion will be observed with suitable expressions of reverence to his hallowed memory, in several centres of religious life where his spirit pulsates. The qualities of the deeds and thoughts of this great spiritual hero have elicited the admiration and adoration of all who have known him. His birthday therefore naturally calls up a strong remembrance of the treasure he has offered to India and the world. Let it be our endeavour to bring to him a tribute of right resolution and action. Our gratitude towards him for his bounty shall be more worthily acknowledged when we addict ourselves to the rule of life set forth by him; when we assimilate his thoughts, and work for the fulfilment of his plans. We shall point out in the following paragraphs, some of the more important aspects of his cultural bequest.

### II

With his penetrating intellect and over-mastering love the Swami was able to detect with an unerring vision what India and the world need at the present day and to lay down a method for its fulfilment. 'The Hindu mind', he complained, 'was ever deductive and never synthetic or inductive. In all our philosophies, we always find hair-splitting arguments, taking for granted some

general proposition, but the proposition itself may be as childish as possible. Nobody ever asked or searched the truth of these general propositions.' This was a serious defect which stunted our national growth. Hence he addressed himself first to the task of organizing the age-long spiritual ideas of Hinduism around that core of wisdom expressed in the Vedic text 'Reality is one, sages call it variously', with the help of the distinctive doctrine of the Chosen Ideal. He synthesized every sincere religious experience of the Hindu race by the power of this grand conception, irrespective of the difference in sects and schools, and set before the diverse religious aspirants the finding of God as the spiritual goal and perfect freedom of every soul as the spiritual rule. This formulation of the common bases of Hinduism and the spiritual freedom it warrants form the corner-stone of our patron Saint's scheme of work for India and the whole religious world.

The personality of Swami Vivekananda was as impersonal as a personality can be. From no other lips could have come with greater aptness these words: 'Truth is my God, and universe my country'. He did not come for India alone. His travel over the various continents gave him an insight into the saving truth the world most needs at this scientific age; namely, a religion that has no fear of truth, a religion that could stand the test of the most exacting standards of science. From his own

deep study of Indian scriptures, extensive travels, prolonged reflection, and intelligent contact with a gracious guru to whom Samadhi, or entranced concentration, was a constant mode of knowledge, he was able to discover and show forth to the world through his achievements and creative words that Vedanta, in its triple setting, complementing each other according to the changing needs of the diverse types of aspirants, is the most apposite religion that would meet this demand.

The great Vedantin as he was, the Swami, started with the axiom, God alone *Is*. The universe is but disguised Divinity; and hence each soul is potentially Divine. Divine dignity is the birthright of the smallest and the lowliest. We must wake up to the Supreme Spirit hiding behind our human mask, shaking off our Self-forgetting slumber. All disvalue lies in our failure to read and understand this open secret. 'Man is to become divine by realizing the Divine.' All spiritual paths lead to that domain of Freedom or Moksha. 'Man is not travelling from error to truth', propounds the Swami with a note of authority, 'but climbs up from truth to truth, from truth that is lower to truth that is higher.' This single verdict contains the heal-all for the interminable religious conflicts the world has been witnessing for centuries. This is the crowning realization into which all his other realizations are resolvable.

### III

A truly scientific mind, in the phrase of Thomas Huxley, is possessed of a 'fanaticism for veracity'. The Swami, in addition to his unshaken faith in a benign Providence

and a unique constructive imagination, had an unusually scientific turn of mind. He could not therefore close his eyes to the realities of cosmic existence. The Advaitic dogma of Maya naturally appealed to him much; for he could not incline himself to believe that good and bad are equal and opposite forces. Such a disjunction would only perpetuate social cruelties and vitiate the conception of a divine rule in the universe. To him evil was only undeveloped good; failure, a stepping stone to success; wrong, the region through which the path to right lay.

The world, he asserted, adding his voice to that of ancient sages, is an inexplicable mystery (Anirvachaniya) so long as we are players on its stage and are blind to its essential reality. Life is ephemeral and its fortunes are uncertain; toils and cares weigh down even the most intelligent man; our hardly-won virtues are unstable and imperfect; prudence is often too easily lost; the feeling of weakness and frailty poison even our merriest moods; every day we find the inferior man struggling in vain to accomplish what is beyond his power; the timid and unassertive are thrown at the mercy of those whom they should command; the meticulously scrupulous and sensitive are constantly involved in the agonies of moral conflict; the wicked flourish, the good wane; our thoughts are fleeting as smoke; the wave of fortune may carry us on its crest only to dash to pieces in the next moment on the rocks of misfortune; the cruel hand of death wipes out the picture of life as if with a sponge when we are the least prepared for it; and every attempt to know the meaning of all this ends in failure before the

ordinary man gets any inkling of it. What else is this but a mysterious show? But at the heart of these puzzles, at the core of this struggle, there is a silver-streak of hope. Can we ever be dissatisfied with, and be chafing at, these conditions had they been our true nature? That appears unreasonable. The fire never refuses to burn, or water to gravitate to a lower level, or a plant to turn its leaves to the sun. The very naturalness of our dissatisfaction points to the fact that we are to conquer, to transcend, this turmoil of existence through progressive unfoldment of our deep-laid spiritual nature. The purified part of our own mind will emancipate the other part, for the time being made a sport by the conflicting forces of Nature. Our intellectual enterprise and moral evolution will have reached the goal and the conundrums propounded by the inscrutable Sphinx—this universe—will be unravelled, when we end our voyage of knowledge in the haven of Truth. This is the philosophic background, against which the Swami reared the edifice of his practical ethics. He shaped his life in its light; he plunged into the realization of those truths to bring out its hidden treasures for the good of all. System-building or imaginative speculation was far from him. The needs of man in the workaday world underlie his philosophy. They cry aloud from every line of his published works. For it was his passion to uplift the forlorn, raise the depressed, and redeem the sunken with the magical power of innate Divinity—for all are children of Immortal Bliss. Such a social gospel rooted in spiritual vision is undoubtedly a veritable tonic for the

weak and a corrective to the vain, narrow-minded accumulators who override their right to live.

#### IV

'The Swami Vivekananda', remarked Sister Nivedita in a significant context, 'would have been less than he was, had anything in this Evangel of Hinduism been his own ... He stands merely as the Revealer, the Interpreter of India, of the treasures that she herself possesses in herself. The truth he preached would have been as true, had he never been born. Nay more, they would have been equally authentic. The difference would have lain in their difficulty of access, in their want of modern clearness and incisiveness of statement, and in their mutual coherence and unity. Had he not lived, texts that today will carry the bread of life to thousands, might have remained the obscure dispute of scholars.' Yet he was a singularly original teacher in as much as he had actually realized the truths which he intellectually expounded; in as much as he brought to the fore the three schools of Vedanta as three necessary phases of spiritual development; and in as much as he emphasized, throughout, the integral practice of all the four Yogas for a fuller development of personality. This is the mode in which he 'my-ized' (in his own phrase) the entire range of religious thought and action.

The Swami's programme for individual and collective progress was thoroughly based on a clear understanding of human psychology. Man is a thinking, willing, feeling being; any scheme, whether religious or secular, unduly emphasizing one of these powers and neglecting the others has

little prospect of success. Swami Vivekananda's new emphasis on the four-fold Yoga adumbrated in the *Bhagavadgita* and other scriptures, as a parallel spiritual course, takes into account this very need of the human being. Man has to live in a world of becoming, caught up as he is in the eddies of action; hence he neglects the cultivation of his will at his peril. The mainspring of action lies in his feelings and emotions, but for which the will is crippled; and at the same time it is the singular prerogative of man to be reflective; the moment he fails to exercise this gift he trips, he perishes. Education does not mean to this great monk either book-learning or diverse knowledge; but 'the training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful'.

## V

Swami Vivekananda himself was his best sermon; he did not want others to become what he was not. Be and make was his motto. The saying runs that a great institution is the shadow of a noble man, which increases as time passes; the Swami and the organization which he set up afford the best illustration of it. The integration of the threefold faculties of man—emotion, volition, and reflection—through the careful practice of the four Yogas has received concrete expression in the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission. Swami Vivekananda wanted to make the Mission an ideal blending of intensity and extensivity, action and meditation, old and new, East and West, reason and authority, idealism and practicality, so that it may become an instrument in ushering a new order in which neither the demands of the

group may cancel the claims of the individual nor the licence of the individual infringe collective solidarity.

Whatever Swami Vivekananda has uttered or done is only to elucidate, substantiate, demonstrate, and promulgate the one truth; namely, that the good of others and perfection of one's soul are, as it were, two points joined by one line; start from the one you move along to the other, provided you do not stray off. None has ever stumbled upon perfection, excusing himself the trouble of cultivating the self—in other words, without suitable exercise of charity, without Yajna or renunciation and sacrifice. Any social gospel that ignores the perfection of each soul, the attainment of the full stature of the self,—which consists in the identification of one's own interests with the best interests of all living beings—cannot sustain itself for long. These two aspects of the Swami's gospel are vitally brought out in these pithy passages: 'Follow God and you shall have whatever you desire'. 'Try to be pure and unselfish—that is the whole of religion'. 'My children, the secret of religion lies not in theories, but in practice. To be good and to do good—that is the whole of religion'.

According to the Swami the facts of Religion are public, and there is nothing in religion that is hidden or that cannot stand the midday light of observation and reflection. Broad culture, steady will, earnest investigation, and deep reflection alone can make one strong and virtuous. Religion is realization and character is the test of realization. Bearing this in mind the Swami wrote: 'Be moral, be brave. Be a heart-whole man.

Strictly moral, brave unto desperation. The brave are always moral. Cowards only sin, brave men never, no, not even in the mind.' These admonitions to a youth typify his religious attitude. In another letter he adjured, 'You must have strict morality. Deviate an inch from this and you are gone for ever.' Just as 'renunciation and service' is the nostrum which summarizes his lesson for India, strength and bravery are the prerequisites for the attainment of the ideal inculcated thereby; hence he was never tired of insisting upon purity and Brahmacharya.

## VI

Great things are done only with great labour; and the Swami knew very well where the weak spot lay. Let us read his own words: 'Three things are necessary to make every man great, every nation great: (1) Conviction of the power of goodness; (2) absence of jealousy and suspicion; (3) helping all who are trying to be and do good. Why should the Hindu nation with all its wonderful intelligence and other things have gone to pieces? I would answer you. *Jealousy*... Three men cannot act in concert together in India for five minutes. ...idea of... liberty joined with eternal energy and progress must spread over India, it must electrify the whole nation and must enter the very pores of society in spite of the horrible ignorance, spite, caste-feeling, old babooism, and jealousy which are the heritage of this nation of slaves'. 'Brother, we can get rid of everything, but not of that cursed jealousy... That is a national sin with us, speaking ill of others, and burning at heart at the greatness of others. Mine alone is

the greatness, none else should rise to it!'

In a letter dated October 27, 1894, he wrote, 'I am not an organizer, my nature tends towards scholarship and meditation'. In the same year he wrote to an American friend, 'The same man never succeeds both in thinking and scattering thoughts. Thoughts so given are not worth anything... My idea of doing good is only this—to evolve a few giants, and not to strew pearls before swine, and so lose time, health, and energy.' Yet from this taste for solitude combined with vigilant observation came the great power which he brought to bear on all the problems of life; he could not but speak, act, and organize; for, as he himself believed, he had a call from the above. The Swami wanted to train leaders and not followers. No one knew better the strength and weakness of an organization; and hence the Swami's cure for the maladies of man, especially of the Indian people, is sure and fruitful.

'However sublime be the theories, however well spun may be the philosophy', the Swami wrote in a letter, 'I do not call it religion so long as it is confined to books and dogmas.' 'For a religion to be effective enthusiasm is necessary. At the same time we must try to avoid the danger of multiplying creeds. We avoid that by being a non-sectarian sect, having all the advantages of a sect and the broadness of a universal religion.' 'India has to be saved by Indians themselves.' That has to be done, according to the Swami, by raising the masses, by giving them their lost manliness and individuality. 'Let us put ideas into their heads, and they will do the rest. Now this means educating the masses. Here

are difficulties. A pauper government cannot, will not do anything, so no help from that quarter.' 'If the poor cannot come to education, education must reach them at the plough, in the factory, everywhere.'

The preaching and educational work which the Swami proposed for the monastic Order he founded is based on this principle. He said: 'What would make the Sannyasin do this sacrifice? — religious enthusiasm. Every new religious wave requires a new centre. The old religion can only be revived by a new centre. Hang your dogmas, or doctrines, they will never pay. It is character, a life, a centre, a God-man that must lead the way, that must be the centre round which all other elements will gather themselves and then fall like a tidal wave upon the society, carrying all before it, washing away all impurities. ...the old Hinduism can only be reformed through Hinduism, and not through the new-fangled reform movements. At the same time the reformers must be able to unite in themselves the culture of both the

East and the West. ...That centre, that God-man...was Ramakrishna Paramahansa, and round him this band is slowly gathering.'

## VII

The vision of Swamiji is now a reality, and it is our good lot to march under his standard constantly checking our conduct against his example and drawing unfailing inspiration from his flaming words. The Swami was the very antithesis of all negative spirit, and regaling on his spirit, none can fail to attain the highest development possible for any religious aspirant. A personality perfectly trained in his light includes all life's values and none of its weaknesses. That is the gist of his universal Gospel. May the annual reminder which we get in the form of his birthday infuse an increasing number of minds with the vigour and determination to advance the cause he stood for and thereby achieve individual and national welfare in the truest sense of the word.—Ed.

## METAPHYSICS OF THE BHAGAVADGITA

**Dr. P. T. Raju, M.A., Ph.D.** Sastri, is professor of Philosophy in the Andhra University and the author of a thoughtful volume entitled *Thought and Reality* (Allen Unwin, Ltd.). The present article forms part of his forthcoming work, *Idealistic thought in India*, and lends support to the view that the *Bhagavadgita* has a uniqueness and individuality of its own which is often missed when seen through the glass supplied by upholders of various systems of

Indian Philosophy—a view that has gained almost indisputable sway at present.—Ed.

A PRESENTATION of the ideas of the *Bhagavadgita* is as difficult as that of the Upanishads. But we have one advantage in the *Bhagavadgita*, namely, that it is a single work unlike the Upanishads, and that it is less difficult for us to discover some unity in its ideas. Like the Upanishads the *Bhagavadgita* too has many



commentaries, each commentator trying to give his own interpretation to it, and foisting his own system upon it. Consequently one may feel it advisable to abstain from giving a presentation of its ideas, which, one may think, have to be understood in terms of the system of one of the commentaries. Or one may think it safer to point to the detached metaphysical tendencies, as we have done in the case of the Upanishads. But the Upanishads are many, each being the work or insight of a different seer; while the *Bhagavadgita* is one and in consequence we may have better chances of obtaining a unified view of its ideas.

The first glance at the work discloses that the *Bhagavadgita* is not a metaphysical work, but one that prescribes the rules of conduct for those who aspire for the higher life. The occasion for the work is the dejection of Arjuna in the battle-field of Kurukshetra, who, seeing that he had to kill his own kith and kin, threw down his arms and said to Krishna, who acted as his charioteer, that it would be better to go abegging or into the forest than slay one's own people for a kingdom. On this act of Arjuna Krishna begins to explain to him the nature of duty, the aim of life, and, incidentally as it were, the nature of final truth. The primary concern of the *Bhagavadgita* is therefore the conduct of our life, and only secondarily it concerns itself with metaphysics. However, our present interest is in metaphysics, and in spite of the commentaries of Sri Sankara, Sri Ramanuja, Sri Madhva, and a number of others, we shall steer clear of these systems, and putting together the ideas, so far as possible, barely as they are given and

without any sophistication, try to find out their general trend.

There have been a large number of critical studies of the *Bhagavadgita* by Western scholars. Garbe attempts to read the ideas of the Sankhya and Yoga into it. Deussen sees in it a degeneration of the monistic thought of the Upanishads. Keith believes that it is some Upanishad adopted to the cult of Krishna. But whatever be the origin of the work, its metaphysical ideas have a peculiarity of their own. The work, not being one on systematic metaphysics and so not being closely argued, is loose in its connexions, and so allows different interpretations. And yet because the words Sankhya, Yoga, Prakriti, Purusha, etc. occur in it very often, and because it does not lend itself to be interpreted naturally in terms of Sri Sankara's Advaita, Sri Ramanuja's Visishtadvaita, or Sri Madhva's Dvaita, it is opined that it is a degenerate or inchoate form of this or that system. Certainly the Sankhya of which the *Bhagavadgita* speaks is not the Sankhya of Kapila or Isvara-krishna; and its monism need not be that of Sri Sankara, Sri Ramanuja, or Sri Bhaskara. We have seen several kinds of Indian monism, and the protagonists of all the schools claim the *Bhagavadgita* as their authority. The connexions between the ideas being rather loose they lend themselves, though not naturally, to many interpretations. What is a technical word in some system of philosophy may be explained away by taking its etymological meaning by another. What are two substantives for one system may be regarded as a substantive and an adjective by another. Such differences in the method of interpretation may result

in different systems. But if we are to interpret the *Bhagavadgita* in terms of any of these systems, the task need not be attempted, as those systems are given well-constructed in other works. We shall therefore attempt to understand its ideas without any prejudice for or against any of the well-known philosophies.

The first chapter describes the situation in which Arjuna feels dejected and Krishna begins his grand discourse. Though the second chapter is called 'Sankhyayoga', we rarely come across a conception corresponding to the Prakriti of Kapila's Sankhya. It is maintained that the beginning of all things is the Unmanifested, the end is the Unmanifested; but only the middle is the manifested.<sup>1</sup> But this Unmanifested is not the Prakriti of the Sankhya, but is the Brahman itself. It is spoken of in the masculine gender, as indestructible and all-pervading. It is the unborn, the soul,<sup>2</sup> and the incomprehensible.<sup>3</sup> Of course, we read in this chapter of the *tanmatras*,<sup>4</sup> or subtle elements, of the Sankhya; but nothing is said of the insentient Prakriti. We read also of *nirvana* in the Brahman.<sup>5</sup>

In the third chapter we read of Prakriti.<sup>6</sup> But it is not discussed whether this Prakriti is the same as that of the Sankhya, whether it is identical with the Brahman or different from it, or is both identical and different. It is said that all our actions are being done by the Gunas of the Prakriti, though we egoistically believe that we are the agents of our

actions. These Gunas remind us of the Raga, which is one of the *kanchukas* in the Saiva philosophy. It is also mentioned that the senses are higher than the body, the mind higher than the senses, *buddhi* or intellect higher than the mind, and the Brahman or the Lord higher than the intellect.<sup>7</sup>

In the fourth chapter we come across a peculiar idea. The Lord declares that he creates the world by entering his own Prakriti through his own Maya.<sup>8</sup> Here Maya and Prakriti are spoken of as if they are two different entities or principles. But yet they are spoken of as the Lord's own.

In the seventh chapter two kinds of Prakriti are mentioned.<sup>9</sup> The lower Prakriti is divided into a group of eight: the five elements, mind, intellect, and ego. The higher Prakriti is the Jivas, and it supports the whole universe. It is quite possible that the Prakriti and Maya spoken of in the fourth chapter are identical with these two Prakritis, the higher Prakriti being identical with Maya. The Lord declares that he is everything, that nothing exists besides him,<sup>10</sup> and that he is the beginning and end of all.<sup>11</sup> But he says that the products of the three Gunas originate from him, and yet surprises us by adding that the world, stupified by the products of the three Gunas does not see that he is beyond them.<sup>12</sup> Because he is veiled by Yogamaya he is not visible to all.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> II: 28.<sup>2</sup> II: 20.<sup>3</sup> II: 25<sup>4</sup> II: 14.<sup>5</sup> II: 73.<sup>6</sup> III: 27.<sup>7</sup> III: 42.<sup>8</sup> IV: 6.<sup>9</sup> VII: 4 and 5.<sup>10</sup> VII: 7.<sup>11</sup> VII: 6.<sup>12</sup> VII: 12 and 13.<sup>13</sup> VII: 25.

This Yogamaya is a technical term in the system of Sri Chaitanya as expounded by Jivagosvami and Baladeva. It is really the higher Prakriti with the help of which the Lord differentiates Himself into the many, finite souls and screens His identity with them. Though in the *Bhagavadgita* this relation is understood as identity, the school of Sri Chaitanya understands it as inconceivable identity-difference. But Sri Sankara does not seem to be much in favour of taking it as a technical term. He explains it as the union of the Gunas or the concentration of the mind on the Lord.

In the eighth chapter it is openly declared that the Avyakta or the Unmanifest is the Akshara or the Unperishing.<sup>14</sup> Out of this Avyakta all the individual things originate and into it they return.<sup>15</sup> This Akshara is also called Paramapurusha.<sup>16</sup>

In the ninth chapter the Lord again proclaims that the world is manifested by him,<sup>17</sup> that though the world exists in him it is not really there in him, and this peculiarity is due to his lordly Yoga, or unifying power.<sup>18</sup> We have to understand that when the plurality of the world is viewed as unified in Him it does not exist; but still as He is the only reality the world must exist in Him. This peculiarity is due to His power of Yoga, which we may probably identify with Yogamaya. That is, plurality and unity ultimately rest on this peculiar power. We read of Prakriti again<sup>19</sup> out of which the world

comes and into which it enters. This Prakriti is spoken of as His.

But then what is the relation between the world and the Lord? In the tenth chapter we read that the universe is only a part or *amsa* of the Brahman.<sup>20</sup> But it is not clear whether this world is the world of Jivas or of insentient matter. It may be both.

In the eleventh chapter Krishna shows Arjuna the world aspect of His nature. And He shows it as the Lord of the Yoga,<sup>21</sup> that is, with the help of His Yogamaya. He declares that He is the Time,<sup>22</sup> swallowing up the whole world of things. That is, the nature of reality in its temporal aspect, or in the language of Western Philosophy, as Zeitgeist or Time-spirit, is shown to Arjuna. In this chapter we come across the idea of the Lord as being beyond both *sat* and *asat*, existence and non-existence, being and non-being.<sup>23</sup> The Lord is described as also both the subject and the object.<sup>24</sup>

Though so far the Lord is identifying Himself with Akshara, in the twelfth chapter He tells us that He is beyond Akshara.<sup>25</sup> Akshara is the Kutastha, whether it is the Sakshi of the Advaita or the beehive-like unity of the Pancharatra. It is, of course, spoken of in the singular. It also is *avyakta* or unmanifest. But the attainment of final liberation through the worship of Akshara or Avyakta is said to be more difficult than through the direct worship of the Lord Himself.

<sup>14</sup> VIII: 21.

<sup>15</sup> VIII: 9.

<sup>16</sup> VIII: 8.

<sup>17</sup> IX: 4.

<sup>18</sup> IX: 5.

<sup>19</sup> IX: 7.

<sup>20</sup> X: 42.

<sup>21</sup> XI: 9.

<sup>22</sup> XI: 32.

<sup>23</sup> XI: 37.

<sup>24</sup> XI: 38.

<sup>25</sup> XII: 3-7.

In the thirteenth chapter the distinction is drawn between the field (*kshetra*) and the knower of the field (*kshetrajna*), that is, between the body and the soul. The body consists of the five Mahabhutas or gross elements, ego, intellect, the unmanifested, the eleven senses, the five objects of senses, desire, hatred, pleasure, pain, aggregation, sentience, and grasping.<sup>26</sup> The important point to note here is that the Avyakta or the Unmanifested is spoken of in the neuter. This is really the unmanifested state of the lower Prakriti. The seer, he who gives the consent, the enjoyer, etc. of the body is the Mahesvara, the *Parah Purushah*.<sup>27</sup> Thus the individual Purusha is identified with the Supreme Being. He is said to be one and undivided but appears to be many<sup>28</sup> and divided; He is *nirguna* or without qualities, but enjoys all qualities;<sup>29</sup> and He is called neither *sat* or existence nor *asat* or non-existence.<sup>30</sup> It is further said that both the Prakriti and the Purusha are without beginning.<sup>31</sup> Even Sankara says that they are the two Prakritis of the Lord. In many Vedantic systems we have come across two kinds of *sakti* or energy of the Brahman, the *bhoktrisakti* and the *bhogyasakti*, energy as the enjoyer and energy as the enjoyed. These two correspond practically to these two Prakritis, though as regards the relation between them on the one hand and the Lord on the other there are differences between the systems.

In the fifteenth chapter all the Jivas are said to be the *amsas* or parts of the Lord.<sup>32</sup> That is, the Lord is conceived to be the whole of which the Jivas are the parts. And these Jivas experience themselves as separate from the Lord, and also regain their sense of unity with the Lord by virtue of the power of the Lord's Yogamaya or the Maya of His unity. This is a peculiar conception found in the system of Sri Chaitanya and his followers. But we have to be on our guard and should not identify the teachings of the *Bhagavadgita* in every detail with that system. We do not get the idea of *achintyabhedabheda* or inconceivable identity-difference that marks off the system of Sri Chaitanya from the other Vedantic systems. The *Bhagavadgita* speaks only of identity and of the relation of part and whole. The distinction between the two is not emphasized, whereas it is repeatedly said that in *mukti* the Jiva enters *nirvana* and becomes the Brahman, that the Purusha is Mahesvara himself, and so forth. But again we have to note that there is no Maya here as understood by Sri Sankara and his followers. The Maya of the *Bhagavadgita* is the higher Prakriti of the Lord; it is called Yogamaya or *Aisvaram Yogam*. It is through this Maya that the Lord as the subject divides Himself into the plurality of the subjects and screens from them their essential identity. The other Prakriti is objectivity and is rarely called Maya.

In this chapter too the relation between Kshara, Akshara, and Purushottama is pointed out.<sup>33</sup> Kshara is the finite Jiva, Akshara is the

<sup>26</sup> XIII: 5 and 6.

<sup>27</sup> XIII: 22.

<sup>28</sup> XIII: 16.

<sup>29</sup> XIII: 14.

<sup>30</sup> XIII: 12.

<sup>31</sup> XIII: 19.

<sup>32</sup> XV: 7.

<sup>33</sup> XV: 16-18.

Kutastha or Sakshi and beyond the two is the Purushottama, the Supreme Person.

This brief sketch of the ideas of the *Bhagavadgita* shows that the work is absolutistic, but the Absolute here is a person. So the idealism of the *Bhagavadgita* is personalistic, though not pluralistic. But the world of matter is not thought of as unreal, or as neither real nor unreal. It is said to be one of the Prakritis or natures of the Lord, who on the other hand is declared to be neither being

nor non-being. The world of plurality is unified thus by the *Bhagavadgita* in its own way. We may conclude that the doctrine of the *Bhagavadgita* is an Advaita, though it is an Advaita of its own kind. And we have already seen upholders of Advaita for whom neither the doctrine of the unreality of the world nor of its *anirvachaniyata* or inexplicability is true. There have been more than one kind of Advaita in India, and the doctrine of the *Bhagavadgita* is one of them.

P. T. RAJU

## VISISHTADVAITA: TWO OF ITS GREAT TEACHERS

We shall be presenting in this and in one of the following numbers a study of Visishtadvaita and two of its foremost teachers, written by **Swami Prabhavananda**, the Head of the Vedanta Centre, Hollywood, U.S.A. They form sections of the Swami's projected book on *Indian Religion and Philosophy*.—Ed.

### I

VISISHTADVAITA Vedanta, or the Vedanta in its aspect of qualified monism, of which Sri Yamunacharya was a well-known teacher, traces its origin to the period of the Upanishads; at least it had gained followers at the time of the composition of the *Mahabharata*, being identical with the doctrine of Pancharatra mentioned in that Epic. By the tenth century A.D., however, it received a greater impetus and a newer light in the teachings of the saint Yamuna; and in the eleventh century the great teacher Sri Ramanujacharya who had been influenced by Yamuna, gave a sound philosophical basis to the doctrine, making it a popular religion

particularly in Southern India. Yamuna and Ramanuja belonged to the long line of Vaishnava saints in Southern India known as *Alvars*. This is a Tamil word which means 'he who rules the world by his love and devotion to God.' Many legends are prevalent in the South of these ancient Alvars, and all of them clearly express this love and devotion and self-surrender to God.

One of these Alvars was Natha Muni, grandfather of Yamunacharya who was known to history as a great saint living in the early part of the tenth century. Born of a well-known Brahmin family, on the death of his son he gave up the life of the world and embraced a life of renunciation. He wrote two books which are regarded authoritative by the Sri Vaishnava school of monism.

Yamuna, his grandson, was born in 953 A.D. At the age of twelve he became king of half the kingdom of Pandiya. There is extant an interesting story of how he ascended the throne. It seems that this King of

the Pandyas had a court Pundit who was very clever in debate. Now it was the custom of the country that whoever challenged his scholarship and defeated him in argument would be appointed court Pundit in turn. And whoever challenged the Pundit and was defeated by him must pay an annual sum as tax to him. Yamunacharya was at that time a student of Sribhashya, who had been defeated by the court Pundit and was therefore obliged to pay an annual tax to him. It so happened that when the tax-collector appeared for the annual tax, Sribhashya was absent from home and Yamuna, then a boy of twelve, felt the humiliation his teacher must bear in paying such a tax. So he himself challenged the Pundit to debate. Though this king and the Pundit were amazed at the child's temerity, they were obliged to accept the challenge.

As was the custom, the boy was brought to court and accorded due honour and respect. The Queen, when she saw the boy, felt sure that he would be crowned victor, for she saw that he was no ordinary child. When she confided her thoughts to the King, he laughed and jokingly offered to lay a wager against him. The Queen said, 'If the boy is defeated, I promise to be the slave of your Majesty's slaves.' To this the King replied, 'If the boy wins, I will offer him half my kingdom.'

So the boy and the Pundit entered into debate. And to the surprise of all the boy stoutly defeated the Pundit, who was obliged to acknowledge his defeat at the hands of a mere child. The King, paying his bet, offered Yamuna half his kingdom, and he ruled for many years at peace with all men.

The news of Yamuna's elevation to the throne came to the ears of Natha Muni, his grandfather, who was then living as a Sannyasin (monk). Fearing lest his grandson should give himself over to worldliness, he charged Nambi, his favourite disciple, to keep watch over Yamuna and see that he did not lose himself in love of the world but that he might find the truth.

When Yamuna was thirty-five years old, and still reigning over his kingdom, Nambi appeared before him saying, 'Your grandfather has left a vast treasure with me. If it is your desire to find this treasure, you must follow me, and follow me alone.' So they walked together, ate together, and lived together. As King Yamuna thus associated with Nambi, he came to admire the greatness of the devotee, his love for God, his purity of conduct, and above all the peace and joy that ever shone in his countenance. And there arose in the heart of King Yamuna a mighty longing to find God and attain peace. So, living as he did close to a holy man like Nambi, the King lost all taste for the enjoyments of the world, and lacked even the desire to return to his kingdom. Then both of them retired to the temple of Sri Ranganatha. Thus Yamuna became a monk and a guru.

## II

In his later years Yamunacharya wrote four famous books. He wished to write a commentary on the *Brahmasutras*, but he passed away before the fulfilment of his desire. Instead, he expressed a wish that Sri Ramanuja, whom he loved much, should do so. Sri Ramanuja, who had already won fame for himself, hastened to him but arrived too late.

for Yamunacharya had just passed away. But he promised to carry out the other's dying wish and later succeeded in doing so.

The philosophy of Sri Yamunacharya may be summarized as follows: God is the Supreme Being. He is the whole of which individual souls are the parts. We are related to Him as are the waves to the ocean. The universe is a transformation of God, Who is the soul of the universe, the universe being His body.

The ideals of all-consuming love for God and self-surrender to Him are expressed beautifully in a famous prayer written by Sri Yamunacharya. He says:

'God is beyond the realm of speech and mind, He is the ground of speech and mind, and He is the ocean of mercy. How can we pray to Him or praise Him, Who is worshipped and praised even by the great gods? In the ocean are drowned the high mountain and the small atom. No difference is felt by the ocean.'

'My beloved, O Thou Sweet One, "I", "me", and "mine", "whatever I have"—all belong to Thee. And if I am conscious of the truth that all belongs to Thee forever, then what could I offer Thee?'

'I am Thine'—this is the attitude of the devotees of Visishtadwaita. The Vaishnava devotees of Bengal preach another beautiful truth: 'Thou art mine'.

Sri Yamuna further writes: 'Thou art Father, Thou art Mother, Thou art son, Thou art daughter, Thou art dear friend, Thou art Guru, Thou art the supreme goal and refuge of the whole universe.' And the supreme ideal is to take refuge in the Lord and surrender oneself completely to

Him. This ideal of surrender was developed by Sri Ramanuja.

### III

Sri Ramanuja was born at Sri-perumbudur in Southern India in the year 1017 A.D. His mother was a grand-daughter of Sri Yamuna, the saint and philosopher, whom we have already met in our studies. In his youth Sri Ramanuja journeyed to Conjeevaram in order to study Vedanta with a teacher known as Yadava Prakasa.

Sri Yadava Prakasa, a celebrated interpreter of Vedanta, wrote a commentary upon the *Brahmasutras* which has unfortunately been lost. We do know, however, that his interpretation closely followed that of Bhaskara, who, as we have already discovered, believed in the unity of souls with Brahman with respect to knowledge, and acknowledged difference from Him with respect to ignorance. In the view of Yadava, these distinctions are as real as is identity. Like Bhaskara, Yadava interpreted the philosophy of Bheda-bheda or unity in difference.

The youthful Ramanuja pursued his studies under the direction of Yadava for a time, but their paths soon parted. The fact was that the young man soon offered his own interpretation of the philosophy of Vedanta which seemed more reasonable to the other students gathered about the master, but which made the latter furiously angry. He accordingly conceived a dislike for and a consuming envy of his brilliant pupil.

Matters came to a head on the occasion when Yadava was requested by the ruler of the country to heal his

little daughter supposed to be possessed by demons. When the master failed in his attempt at healing, Ramanuja was called upon to exercise his powers. The story goes that at the young man's bidding the obsessed spirit left the girl and she became quite well. Yadava now hated Ramanuja, who was obliged to depart from the school he was attending. But Yadava became so possessed by hatred and jealousy that he even attempted to assassinate his young pupil, who was saved by a warning given to him by a hunter and his wife. Many years later, however, Yadava recognized Ramanuja's greatness, repented, and became his loyal follower.

Sri Ramanuja now returned to his mother's home, and at her request took upon himself the state of a householder by marrying a girl of her choice.

During this time, Yamuna, now old and sick, and head of the temple of Srirangam, hearing of Ramanuja's learning and purity of character, desired to install him in the apostolic seat at Srirangam. When the aged saint was about to breathe his last, his disciples sent for Sri Ramanuja to come to his bedside, but he arrived just as Yamuna's body was being conveyed to the river bank for cremation. As Sri Ramanuja viewed the corpse, he marked that three fingers of the right hand remained closed. The disciples in explanation said that it indicated the existence of three unfulfilled desires, chief of which was a wish to compose a commentary upon the *Bramhasutras*. When Sri Ramanuja promised to take upon himself the fulfilment of these tasks, legend has it that the three fingers

forthwith assumed their natural position.

After Sri Ramanuja's return to Conjeeveram, his spirit grew restless, for he could see no light concerning how he should fulfill his promise. Accordingly, he sought advice of the head priest, who uttered a Sanskrit verse which seemed to be the word of God and His will: 'I am the Supreme. The Truth is based upon distinction (between souls and me). Self-surrender is the surest way to the door of salvation. Whether man struggles or not, salvation will come in the end. Accept the discipleship of Perianambi.' So Sri Ramanuja set out to meet Nambi at the same time when Nambi was approaching Conjeeveram to meet him. They met in a temple on the road, where Nambi initiated Ramanuja into the mysteries of Vedanta, whereupon both came to Conjeeveram.

Sri Ramanuja was not happy in his marriage for in his heart he longed for the time when he might devote himself uninterruptedly to worship and meditation upon God. His wife, instead of aiding him to attain the life he most desired, constantly irritated him by her thoughtless conduct. At last Sri Ramanuja, feeling the call of God from within, renounced all worldly ties, took the monk's vows, and set out for Srirangam, where the great saint Yamuna, before he passed away, had desired that he should live.

During his life as a monk at Srirangam, he grew extremely popular and many aspirants gathered round him. But still Sri Ramanuja remained unsatisfied. There was living at that time another saint whose name was Goshtipurna. To him went Sri Ramanuja and reverently begged



initiation of him. Six times he went to him, and six times he was refused. At last, however, seeing his earnest devotion, Goshthipurna initiated him with the sacred Mantra, but warned him that he must never give that Mantra to anyone, for if he did he would suffer damnation; but that whoever heard the sacred words would attain salvation. Upon learning this, Sri Ramanuja stood upon a high altar in the temple and, gathering round him crowds of people, he uttered the sacred Mantra, *Om namo Narayanaya*, in the hearing of all. The teacher upbraided him for his thoughtless act, but Sri Ramanuja replied, 'If by my suffering damnation, so many can attain salvation, I desire that as the supreme.' Pleased, the teacher answered, 'Because of your great love for humanity, the philosophy of Visishtadwaita shall henceforth be known as the Ramanuja Philosophy.'

Sri Ramanuja now made Srirangam his headquarters, and travelled occasionally to various parts of the country, preaching and gathering many disciples. He also wrote his commentary upon the *Brahmasutras* as he promised before the body of Yamuna. It is known as *Sri Bhashya* and is held in great respect by the followers of Srivaishnavism. He wrote a commentary upon the *Gita* and some original philosophical treatises propounding his doctrine of Visishtadwaita. He passed away in the year 1137 A.D. after a fruitful life of one hundred and twenty years. He is worshipped today by thousands of his followers, and is regarded by all India as one of the greatest saints and philosophers in the history of that country.

#### IV

Since human beings possess widely differing temperaments, they conduct their lives upon different levels of growth. For this reason, no one system of philosophy or religion can equally well satisfy human needs at these levels of growth. For this reason, then, there exist diverse systems of philosophy and diverse forms of religious truth. And yet, however divergent they may be, there is below them all an underlying unity, and all of them lead men by many paths, straight or crooked, to a single goal. The Holy Scriptures of the religions of the world may be likened to a kind mother who cherishes her many children by granting their demands according to their needs. From the Indian Scriptures the philosophers of that land have drawn their inspiration and evolved their various systems of thought—from their ever kind mother, the Vedas and their subsequent scriptures.

After Sri Sankara, Sri Ramanuja is regarded as the greatest interpreter of Vedanta. Sri Sankara's philosophy, though it did afford spiritual comfort to many, yet did not meet the needs of many aspirants. Men there are, be it said, in every age who hunger for a God whom they can love, whom they can worship. Now the Absolute of Sri Sankara becomes to such men entirely too great an abstraction to be the object of love and worship. It is true that Sri Sankara does reserve a place in his system for a God of love and there is room enough for devotion to a personal Deity, but to very many his Isvara is not too satisfying, for they regard Him as but a lower aspect of Brahman, the Absolute; and of course all personal considerations at once disappear in

the highest illumination as we become one with Brahman. The philosophy of Sri Sankara touches indeed such dizzy heights of abstract intellectualism, and at the same time such a surpassing degree of spiritual illumination, that it becomes extremely difficult if not impossible for most men either to comprehend it or to accept it. So they are inclined to regard this Absolute of Sri Sankara as, in the words of Sir S. Radhakrishnan, 'a bloodless Absolute dark with the excess of light'.

So the kind mother, the Scriptures, spoke once more through the lips of Sri Ramanuja, bidding him lead the people to the bosom of Truth. Sri Ramanuja then argues that God and the souls of men are not the same, though they are not separate from

each other, and that the highest ideal and the ultimate goal is to love and worship God and surrender ourselves utterly and completely unto Him. The material world and human souls, though different, have a real existence of their own as the body of Brahman, who is their soul and controlling power. Apart from Brahman they are literally non-entities. So Sri Ramanuja's philosophy is known as *Visishtadwaita*; that is, Advaita, non-dualism, with *visesha*, or qualifications, because it admits the plurality of matter and souls as well. This system did not originate with Sri Ramanuja, but he is its greatest exponent, so much so, indeed, that it has come to be identified with his name.

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

## THE QUEST OF GODHEAD

**Mr. Kapileswar Das, M.A., B.T.**, offers some reflections on the eternal quest of man in the following paragraphs.—Ed.

WHY should a God be posited? What is there in these three letters? Is God an anthropomorphic being clinging to the savage reminiscences of the modern man? Is He a figment of human fancy? Is He a being somewhere behind the clouds rewarding those who devote themselves to Him, and punishing those who turn from Him? Then, is He not partial like man, gratified by congratulation and incensed at repulse? What is the relation of God to the visible universe? These questions frequently occur to the critical modern mind and demand a rational explanation.

To give a direct answer to these questions and thereby satisfy all is

a superhuman task. For, only infinity can answer and satisfy infinity. The fact is, all thoughts and actions of humanity from the dawn of creation are only a seeking for this explanation. They constitute the search of the Unknown, the Beyond. It is inherent in human nature to devote itself to the supreme controller, guide, and revealer of all. The men of the Paleolithic and the Neolithic ages worshipped stones, trees, and snakes. The Indo-Aryans worshipped Dyaus (The God of the sky), Mitra, Pushan, Vishnu (representing the various aspects of Surya), Rudra, Usha (the goddess of dawn), and others. The Teutons worshipped the sun and moon, woden (war god), Thor (Thunderer), Tew (god of darkness), Frea (Goddess of beauty), and Soetere (God of hate), from which

the names of the days of the week have come to us. The Greeks worshipped Artimis (the Goddess of fine arts), Appollyon (the angel of the bottomless pit), Rhea (the fruitful earth), Hermes (God's messenger and the God of eloquence), Ares (the God of battle), and others. The Greeks believed that their gods and goddesses revelled on the mount Olympus, careless of human sufferings. The Romans worshipped gods and goddesses corresponding to the Greek ones; namely, Apollo, Ops, Mars, and others. In all these cases the psychosis is the same—the human attitude of dependence and hope. Whether man worshipped Godhead at the outset as natural forces or powers, Muses, Graces, Faculties, or whatever it be, it was to please a higher being for some reward or to avoid some punishment.

Along with the development of thought, the existence of a number of gods and goddesses was questioned. Speculation began on the problems of creation, life, and death, which has puzzled the mind of mankind ever since. What is the function of all these gods? The universe, in fact, is under one control ultimately. Thus arose the concept of the one Supreme, the *Visvakarman* (the all-maker) or the *Hiranyagarbha* of the Aryans, the Zeus of the Greeks, and the Jupiter of the Romans.

Thus down through ages the concept of God has come to us being made most complex through metaphysical postulates, ethical considerations, scientific developments, and the progress of humanity at large. Turning to our scriptures, we may sum up here a few human considerations of Godhead bearing relation to man's devotion, though as already pointed

out, to exhaust such a topic is beyond human capacity.

What is God? God is the unmanifest in the manifest, beyond the reach of the senses. The unmanifest existence fills the universe in manifestation. In fact, through His existence is this universe posited by Maya and it seems to be existent. It has no separate independent existence. The universe depends for its existence on its beginningless cause—God. But God does not depend upon anything, for He is self-existent. He is the cause of all beings and things; but He is attached to none. As Akasa, the ether, encloses all, but remains detached from all, as the wind blows through the space but is not attached to anything, so is God. He is the indestructible seed, the primal cause of the primordial stuff, out of which the universe is made. But the cause is not destroyed through the effect, nor worked out along with it. As yarn, the cause of the cloth, constitutes the cloth; as gold, the cause of the ornament, constitutes the ornament; as earth, the cause of the earthen vessel, constitutes the earthen vessel: so is not God the cause and the constituent of the universe. With the destruction of the cloth, the ornament, or the vessel, the cause is also destroyed; but God is the indestructible cause. The seeds of grain are exhausted when once they sprout into plants; but God is the inexhaustible seed. He is Aptakama—desire-fulfilled.

What more can He whose desire is fulfilled wish for? From the relative point of view God is spoken of as the creator, preserver, and destroyer of the Universe. But creation etc. is the spontaneous play of His free will (*lila*). As the show of magic does

not bind the magician or the dream phenomenon does not attach the dreamer, so the fleeting illusion of the universe does not attach Him. God is beyond the categories of time, space, and causation. He is manifest as Nama-rupa, name and form; He is existence and non-existence as Purusha and Prakriti. God cannot be apprehended by the limited consciousness of man: Yet humanity has implicit faith in His existence. This seeming contradiction of conception is beautifully brought out in a Hindi couplet:—

'If it is said God is, He cannot be shown. He is not—cannot be said of Him (for, then what is?). So our Lord (God) is between (or beyond) existence and non-existence. He is the all—the body, mind, and intellect (made up of the gross elements and their subtle essences, the Tanmatras). the embodied soul (consciousness bounded by Avidya), and the supreme consciousness (beyond the play of Maya). As there is no difference between the sun and his light, but only the condensed form of light is known as the sun, so is God the Brahman, unbound and bound by Maya at the same time. He is both the efficient and the material cause of the Universe. As the efficient cause of the thread the spider produces it as a conscious agent, and the material cause of the thread is its body; so also God, as the sustainer of Maya (along with her powers of veiling and movement) the efficient cause, and through Maya He becomes the material cause of the universe. Maya as Prakriti is unconscious. She cannot herself exhibit the play of creation. Her apparent conscious creativity is only reflected through the proximity of the Purusha—God. But

is God not bound by the creation? As the sun is the revealer of the world but is not the cause of the good and bad actions of beings who are impelled to those actions by their own nature, so is God the creator, yet actionless and unattached. Body, mind, and intellect are the products of the unconscious *prakriti* (*para*). Both these exist in and through God. At the time of the great dissolution (*pralaya*) they lapse into God in the most subtle form of causal seed. In this sense God is the creator and destroyer of the universe. As gems are strung into a necklace by means of the thread running through them, so are the innumerable worlds woven and their balance kept in infinite space through the thread of Godhead. In the absence of the thread the gems would fall scattered: so the universe would be a chaotic mass, a jumble of clashing spheres and planets, without the harmonizing equilibrium of Godhead. As the same thread running through the gems is hidden by them and not easily seen, so is God veiled through the universe, the sustainer veiled by the sustained. But it should not be understood that, as the thread and the gems are separate or as the thread is trivial or transitory compared to gems, so is God in relationship with the Universe. Analogies, however apt, are imperfect. The thread (*sutra*) here is the *Taijasa*, dream-consciousness, wherein the dreamer dreams of gems, but realizes their illusion in the consequent awakened state. God is the *Purushottama*, for He is separate from the unconscious categories of Nature and higher than the veiled consciousness.

In short, all is one in real nature, *svarupa*. But due to the veiling of

Maya differences appear. Just as the Ganges and its canal and the channel dug from its source are one in water but different in name, so are the embodied soul, the Atman, and the Paramatman. This is the explanation the Hindu thought gives to the exemplary blunt question of the practical man of the world, 'Is Picaddilly Circus God?' Picaddilly Circus is not God as long as its seer is veiled by Maya and is subject to the categorical (Aupadhika) distinctions of Maya and is conscious of the main forms of distinctions, viz., Sajatiya, (of the same class) Vijatiya (of different classes), and Svagata (of the individual). But when he rises above the sense of duality, partakes of the pure and perfect experience, when he is merged in unbroken bliss, then not only Picaddilly Circus but everything from the pillar to the Brahman (Abrahmastambha) is God.

Then why does not man know God? God is the unknown, the beyond and therein lies the possibility of the human quest after the Infinite. For, in the realm of the known, the sensed, the apprehensible, where is the scope for further development? As the moon is obscured behind the clouds, so is the Infinite obscured through the finite and this finitizing principle is His own creation, the Yoga-Maya of Godhead.

Is God partial? If God is more attached to the devotees than to others, is He not after all moved by the ordinary human feelings of friendship and enmity? God is not partial and there is neither friend nor foe to Him. The devotee, through deep meditation and the dawning of wisdom, is conscious of the universe as not different from God. He then moves

and has his being in God. Others feel themselves separate from Him through their own ignorance. The devotee is free from sins. His heart is transparent and so God is reflected therein; whereas the heart of an impure man is so covered with the dirt of selfishness that God is not reflected in it. Just as the sun shines impartially over all, yet his rays are clearly reflected on the transparent surface of the mirror but not so on the opaque surface of an earthenware; just as the fire is able to destroy cold and darkness for all impartially, yet the man who is near the fire feels its heat and light more than he who is at a distance, so is God impartial. Through worship and devotion the devotee attains the necessary proximity and transparency; and is merged in Godhead.

Thus God is the cause of Maya. He is the fulfiller of desires and the giver of fruits of actions, good and bad. He is knowable, for the knowledge of Him gives freedom; pure, for He destroys all sins. He is the Highest Wisdom, the OM, the goal of paths; the Lord and the sustainer of beings at Whose command the mighty elements work in harmony and co-ordination; the witness of all, the ultimate shelter, the heaven of bliss, the benevolent. Indeed, what can we give Him who is the beginning, the middle, and the end of beings? How can we apprehend His glory by means of our limited vision?

Hence the necessity for worship. Let humanity bend its proud head in awe and reverence in the presence of the profound Sublimity of the Beyond and offer its devotion at His feet.

## RELIGIOUS HARMONY

A lecture delivered by **Swami Rajeswaranand** at the Third Federation of Religions, 1940, held under the auspices of the Truth Seekers' Fraternity, on the 25th November, 1940, at the University Examination Hall, Madras, with Her Highness Dowager Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mayurbhanj in the chair.—Ed.

THE world we live in is a cosmos and not a chaos. It is a uni-verse and not a multi-verse. The Cosmic Heart throbs equally in the soul-temples of one and all. The One White Flame of Truth ever shines in all the multi-coloured lamps of various teachings. The One Divinity dwells impartially in all the churches, mosques, temples, and tabernacles of the world. Such a religious consciousness of harmony is as broad as the sky allowing all luminaries to shine in its spacious amplitude. It is free from any dogma or dry forms of ritualism, any fossilized traditions or conventions, any dubious uncertainty of philosophical speculations or logical abstractions.

Science is, no doubt, making the world a single unit. No longer can the different nations keep aloof from one another. Humanity is now linked up together. Life has become, as it were, a world-broadcast. Along with the unification of the physical side of man there has not progressed the spiritual integrity and mutual understanding among men. Science has, no doubt, brought power and speed to the earth. But objective science is not all. If there is science of matter, there must be science of the mind. If there is science of mind,

there must be science of Truth, the Absolute Self. The spiritual should be the dominant force. It is only when the science of Self, the unitary principle of existence, is known, that there can be peace and good-will in all spheres of life.

Attempts have been and are being made to spread mutual understanding and peace among mankind. The League of Nations is the first secular institution that was established as one of the fruits of the Great War to bring about different nations under one common organization and to settle all disputes by persuasion and not through force. But it has failed at every step. Peace-pacts do, of course, remain only as scraps of paper and products of mutual distrust and rivalry. We heard sometime back of a World Brain Trust through which the scientists hope to come together and not to make their knowledge an instrument of destruction. And we are also familiar now with Parliaments of Religions and Fellowships of Faiths. Many have been the upheavals of religious thought. There is today a religious earthquake in the world. The leaders of thought are trying to bring about harmony and reconciliation based on common interests. They realize that the real problem of the world demands a solution not only on the economic, social, and political lines, but mainly in the spiritual way which is religious harmony.

The no-god movement that crops up here and there, is born of a misunderstanding of the truths of religion. Religion in itself can never be

baneful to the progress of the individual and the race. Religion could not be condemned simply because some of its followers and institutions are found wanting. Churches may come and go; priests may not live up to the ideals of the message of the prophets. The priests may try to crib, cripple, and cabin religion into narrow groves, though it cannot be made particular and parochial. The Buddhists preach non-injury and freedom from desires; the Christians preach love and forgiveness; the Muslims preach recognition of the brotherhood of man; the Hindus preach realization of the Divinity in man, bird, and beast; the Parsis preach worship of purity; the Jainas preach prayer, fast, and non-injury; and so on and so forth. These preachings often remain as preachings only. Instead of suggesting or promulgating these old old principles, if each tries to live up to them, the whole world will be transformed into a heaven on earth. There is of course no dearth of religious truths. There is an abundant lack of true followers. The head and the heart should march hand in hand. Precept and example carry their own credentials and propaganda automatically just as a full-blown flower radiates its fragrance all round. That is why the prophets preached religion as having universal application, freed from its accretions and superstitions.

Provincialism in truth is a contradiction in terms. Religion cannot be used more or less as an 'opiate' for the masses. It cannot bribe anybody with a promise of heaven or make a threat of hell. Many meaningless *do's* and *don'ts* go under the guise of its injunctions and create anachronisms today. If religion

could be realized in its unfailing expression of the oneness of life and existence, troubles national, international, social, political, industrial, and also religious, will soon come to an end. Religion is the most vital, the most permanent, and the most determining element in human life. In fact, it is the very soul of civilization. It awakens man to the underlying unity of the Self, while science and philosophy coldly assure. The true spirit of religion makes for peace and joy, and expresses the all-encompassing presence of infinite love and wisdom. It creates heroes of peace and provides a spiritual climate that makes the operation of the lower forces of strife and discord impossible. It solves the problem of mankind by the dynamic emphasis on the divinity of man.

It is however harmful to make an amalgam of all the religions and call it religious harmony. The tendency is observed to bring together truths from different religions and call this new product universal religion. This will result only in adding one more faith to the existing ones. Nor will it in any way make for religious harmony to promote any one of the existing religions to the position of being universal. Men's minds are not commodities turned out of a machine. There are differences in temperament, outlook, and development. What is meat to one may be poison to another. The orthodox clung to isolation in their faith and put on a cloak of universal tolerance, admitting the necessity of variety in religious experience. The extremists once proclaimed in their jubilation that religious unity meant one creed, one scripture, one form of worship, and that humanity must be alike every-

where under one banner. One church and one religion for humanity, it is impossible to achieve. In fact there are as many religions as there are human beings. Though each is born in a religion, yet each is born for a religion. Our daily life is our temple and our religion, in the midst of richness of variety and manifoldness of diversity. Religion is written in the life of every individual and one has to study it there. It is only for the sake of convenience that we give one single name to the beliefs of a group of persons, either on account of the place they live in, or due to the book they swear by, or perhaps, they have common allegiance to one prophet. We know how the followers of one and the same prophet differ among themselves in their interpretations of the very same words of their master. This is inevitable and is but natural. We cannot help having varieties of religious experience. Wisdom guides the great man, reason the good man, experience the ordinary man, necessity the ignorant, and nature the beasts. In our scheme for religious harmony let us bear this in mind.

We should lay hold of the centre to which all the radii of different doctrines come and converge. We should regard all religions and cults as beads on one string and revitalize them for individual and collective needs. We should touch the fundamental and foundational ideas and ideals taught in all the great religions and philosophies of the world. We should create not a creed or a cult or a sect but include and transcend every sect and creed. No sect but a synthesis, no church but a university of spiritual culture, is the need of the day to lead humanity on to free-

dom. The religious harmony ought to be synthetic and not syncretic, vital and not vague. Its conduct has to be shaped in accord with a sublime ethics of love and wisdom. Proselytizing is not manly. Spiritual conversion is not horizontal, from one formal faith to another, but vertical, from the lower truth to the higher truth. Formal religion is all husk and shell. In religion there can be no compulsion, condemnation, calculation, and constraint. There is room for every sail on the sea, for every wing in the air, for every star in the sky. Each one has to grow in soil most suited to his soul.

The ideal of religious harmony should emphasize quality rather than quantity, the individual rather than the mass. The individual is the key to life's problem. The happiness of one and all, the peace of the world, must be made first in the individual, in every one, based on the beatitude of constructive living and life of the Eternal Truth. Man needs now not mere learning but wisdom, not mere societies but unity, not mere service but love, not mere police but honesty, not mere drugs but health, not mere law but life, not mere nations but humanity, not mere doctrines but religion. The religious harmony is not mechanical or miraculous, not the self-sufficiency of organization, not international ceremony and sentimentality, not the happy-go and lucky-go conviction or civilization and the like. Nature's plan is unity in the midst of diversity and its law is balance in life. The universe does not allow its equilibrium to be destroyed. 'Each for all and all for each' sums up the rule of adjustment. This synthetic view of life will show the way to the Reality of all realities,



the Religion at the back of all religions. It will lead to the ideal of oneness of the human race, be the individual black or brown, white or yellow. For though a man may differ from his neighbour as Mr. so-and-so, he is one with him as a part of humanity. Though he seems to differ from the animal and the plant, yet he is one with them as a living being. There is thus but one soul throughout the universe, all is but one existence.

The course of life is from the particular to the universal, from the known to the unknown. There is the innate hankering of the human soul for something that is superphysical which will help man to transcend his limitations of life; and this instinct of man to transcend his limitations has urged him on to different phases of religion. All religions clearly show that the Supreme Reality which is unconditioned by time, space, and causation, is the basic principle of the universe. It is the realization of this principle that makes man play his part, prince or page, not as an automaton but as a self-conscious being, to the best of his abilities, in the drama of life on the stage of this world, but at the same time realizing that he is not of it, though in it. Thus it will be seen that universalism is no empty abstraction or limited comprehension. It is an expression of itself in particulars just as the Infinity expresses itself in the finite. It does not spring up or sprout from the spheres of any society, sect, church, cult, creed, colour, community, country, and the like, since

it cannot be institutionalized. Much less is it a vain void difficult to divine. The beauty of its expression and experience consists in its being felt, realized and declared in, through and beyond everything. It does not coerce all minds into the single pigeon-hole of a creed. It is the warm sunshine that spreads its universal heat and rays unto every tree in the grove, making it grow in its own place according to the law of its own being and thus put forth its own flower and fruit. It makes every individual heart to pour out the treasures of divine life.

Religious unity is not uniformity. Uniformity is not universality. Universality is not the totality of all individuality. Individuality is not a mixture of complexity. The true individual is the universal. The true universal is unitary and the only individual. True unity is the Reality. Man is an expression of God and God is the reality of man. Every human being is a moving temple of the Infinite. Infinity alone is bliss.

Let religious harmony establish human life on broader and better foundation and bring one and all on a common and cultural basis to make them embrace one another as members of the great family of humanity, realize the universal unity underlying the diverse faiths in the world and welcome and honour truth whatever quarter it may come from, and behold the splendid sight of the many-coloured lights blending into One Supreme Radiance.

SWAMI RAJESWARANAND

## EARLY RELIGION AND SOCIETY IN SOUTH INDIA

A brief ethnological study of early 'Dravidian' religion forms the theme of the following writing by Prof. S. R. Sharma, M.A., of Willingdon College, Sangli.—Ed.

DURING the third century B.C., a large portion of South India had already come under the influence of Aryan Brahmanism, as is evident from the *Tholkappiyam*, the earliest extant Tamil work, which dates from about the fourth century B.C.<sup>1</sup> This work bears distinct marks of Brahmanical influence, whereas there are no traces in it of either Buddhist or Jaina teachings.<sup>2</sup> Hence, it is important for the light it throws upon the period just preceding the Jaina immigration. The Society it reveals, bears both Aryan and Dravidian characteristics. On the one hand, it speaks of various tribes leading a pastoral or nomadic life, following wild customs, and on the other, a well-ordered society with its professional divisions of *Arasar* or *Kshatriyas*, *Anthanar* (*Parpar*) or *Brahmanas*, *Vanikar* or traders, and *Vellalar* or agriculturists. The duties assigned to each of these were distinctly Aryan, namely, the study of the *Vedas*, the protection of the people, trade, agriculture, and service, *being the special privileges or duties of particular classes*.<sup>3</sup> Though caste

had not yet crystallized into an iron-bound institution, and there was no distinct *Sudra* class, the study of the *Vedas* appears to have been prohibited to a lower section of the *Vellalars*.<sup>4</sup>

The majority of the people followed their own immemorial customs, modified to a certain extent only by their contact with the Aryans. In the words of Kanakasabhai Pillai, the divinities they worshipped 'partook more or less of the character of the classes who invoked them. The semi-barbarous tribes, which were most addicted to war and blood-shed, had ferocious and savage deities, whose altars reeked with blood of slaughtered animals.'<sup>5</sup> Others who were more cultured adopted more humane modes of worship, and pursued, to what extent it is difficult to say, philosophic speculations as to the nature of the world and its Creator.<sup>6</sup> This last characteristic must undoubtedly have been the result of contact with the speculative Aryan. For the most part the religion of the Dravidian was more concrete, and imaginative only within the limits of animism.<sup>7</sup> According to Caldwell, the primitive Dravidians "were without 'priests' and 'idols' and appear to have had no idea of 'heaven' or 'hell', of the 'soul' or 'sin'; but acknowledged the existence of 'God' whom they

<sup>1</sup> Caldwell, *A Comparative Grammar*, Introd. pp. 119-122, 127; Srinivasa Aiyangar, *Tamil Studies*, pp. 117-118.

<sup>2</sup> Seshu Iyengar, *Dravidian India*, I, pp. 155-157; cf. Srinivasa Aiyangar, op. cit., pp. 116-117.

<sup>3</sup> Seshu Iyengar, op. cit., pp. 178-179; Srinivasa Aiyangar, op. cit., pp. 284-285.

In course of time, four divinities corresponding to the four primary divisions of Aryan Society came to be worshipped in

the South as is evident from the *Silappadikaram* xxi: 16-102; cf. Kanakasabhai Pillai, *The Tamils 1800 Years Ago*, p. 231.

<sup>4</sup> Seshu Iyengar, op. cit., p. 179; Srinivasa Aiyangar, op. cit., p. 214.

<sup>5</sup> Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit., p. 227.

<sup>6</sup> Seshu Iyengar, op. cit., p. 112.

<sup>7</sup> Srinivasa Aiyangar, op. cit., p. 284.

styled 'Ko' or King—a realistic title little known to orthodox Hinduism." They erected in his honour a 'temple' which they called 'Ko-il' or 'god's house!'. And Caldwell adds, "I cannot find any trace of the 'worship' which they offered to him."<sup>8</sup> Hence, he characterizes their religion as one in which there was no regular priest-hood, no worship of God, but only propitiation of demons, and no belief in metempsychosis.<sup>9</sup> Their intellectual condition was not more advanced,—“they had no acquaintance with either 'astronomy' or even 'astrology'; they were ignorant not only of every branch of 'philosophy', but even of 'grammar'. Their undeveloped intellectual condition is especially apparent in words relating to the operations of the mind. Their only words for 'mind' were the 'diaphragm' and 'the inner parts' or 'interior'. They had a word for 'thought' but no word distinct from this for 'memory', 'judgment', or 'conscience'; and no word for 'will'. To express 'the will' they would have been obliged to describe it as 'that which in the inner parts says, I am going to say or do so and so'.”<sup>10</sup>

It is well to bear in mind that these observations of Caldwell are based primarily on philological grounds, and also that they are applicable only to the most primitive among the Dravidians. For there have been in South India, within historic memory,

peoples of the most diversified types, and no generalizations would therefore be either just or absolutely correct. The Aryan, the Dravidian, and the aboriginal were the chief elements composing southern society at the time of the Jaina immigration, as even now; and ancient Tamil writers classified men into three corresponding divisions, viz., the *Devar*, *Makkal*, and *Narakar* or *Nagar*.<sup>11</sup> Each one of these contributed its own marked characteristic to the society and religion of South India, and it is well to note their several features, so far as they are distinguishable from one another, at this distance of time.

“Within the recollection of the Tamil people who lived eighteen hundred years ago”, observes Kanakasabhai Pillai, “there was no kingdom older than that of the Nagas”.<sup>12</sup> These were widespread both in South and North India about the time Jainism and Buddhism sprang into existence as well as at the time of their introduction into South India. They seem to have included “all the aborigines who used to inhabit the forests, the low regions, and other unknown realms”.<sup>13</sup> Their influence upon the other peoples and religions of India, including Jainism, is evident from the large part the Naga or serpent plays in the mythology and worship of both the Aryans and the Dravidians. But what concerns us most, immediately, is the description of these people contained in some of the earliest Tamil works now available. The *Manimekhalai*, for example, describes them as having

<sup>8</sup> Caldwell, op. cit., Introd., p. 118.

<sup>9</sup> Caldwell compares this faith to the 'Shamanism' of High Asia, the term 'Shamanism' being derived from Sramana which meant Buddhist or Jaina ascetic, though as a matter of fact these latter had nothing to do with animism. Ibid. Appendix, pp. 580-581.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. Introd., p. 118.

<sup>11</sup> Srinivasachari, *The Ancient Tamils and Nagas*, I.H.Q. III. p. 518.

<sup>12</sup> Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit. p. 41.

<sup>13</sup> Srinivasachari, op. cit. p. 518.

'curved red lips, large bright teeth, and a voice like thunder'. They 'delighted in doing mischief and were always armed with the noose'.<sup>14</sup> They were divided into various tribes like the Marawar, the Eyinar, or the Vedar who were noted for their lawless living; cattle-lifting, pillage and murder being the sole business of their life. According to the *Kalith-thokai*, 'The blood-thirsty Marawar, of strong limbs and hardy frames, fierce looking as tigers and wearing long and carved locks of hair, armed with the bow bound with leather, ever ready to injure others, shot their arrows at helpless travellers, from whom they could rob nothing, only to feast their eyes on the quivering limbs of the victims; the wrathful and furious Marawar, with curled beards resembling the twisted horns of the stag, compelled even kings at the head of large armies to turn their backs and fly, at the loud twang of their powerful bow-strings and the stirring sounds of their double-headed drums'.<sup>15</sup>

The *Manimekhalai* and the *Kalith-thokai* are works of the Third Sangam and hence belong to the early centuries of the Christian era. If the Naga tribes were so fierce and blood-thirsty at that time, it is easy to conceive what they must have been like in the third century B.C., when the principle of *Ahimsa* or non-injury to life was just being introduced to them by the Jainas and the Buddhists. Naturally, their religion, like that of the more advanced Dravidians, and even the Aryan Brahmanas was one characterised by bloody sacrifices.

Besides consulting omens in the chirping and flight of birds, and believing in consecrated stones and water having the miraculous power to counteract poison, witchcraft, etc.,<sup>16</sup> their most universal belief was in the existence of demons, the spirits of persons dead, both benevolent and malevolent in their nature.<sup>17</sup> This was the meeting-ground of the superstitions of various races, and in course of time the intermingling of the Aryan, the Dravidian, and the aboriginals produced a medley of faiths and practices which have survived to our own days practically unaffected in their essentials.<sup>18</sup>

It is not necessary for us to go into the details of this animistic worship, its history and its present condition. But the most dominating feature of South Indian religion, namely, the worship of Mariyamma or Kali, had already come into vogue in the third century B.C. There is mention of this cult in the *Tholkappiyam*, and vivid descriptions in later works like the *Silappadikaram*.<sup>19</sup> Its object was to secure the favour of the goddess in plundering raids etc. and to propitiate her with the blood of slaughtered animals, chiefly the buffalo, against famine, cholera and other like calamities. "The image of Kali was decked in a most frightful manner.

<sup>16</sup> *Silappadikaram*, xii: 120-128; *Ibid.* v: 118-127; cf. Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit. pp. 43, 228-229; *Kalith-thokai*, iv: 10; cf. Srinivasa Aiyangar, op. cit., p. 275.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 284; Slater, *The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture*, pp. 94-95; Sturrock, *South Kanara I*, pp. 137-140; Elmore, *Dravidian Gods in Modern Hinduism*, pp. 12-26.

<sup>18</sup> cf. Srinivasa Aiyangar, op. cit., p. 215.

<sup>19</sup> cf. Shesha Iyengar, op. cit., pp. 176-177; Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit., pp. 43, 227 f.

<sup>14</sup> *Manimekhalai* i, 21-23; cf. Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit. p. 41.

<sup>15</sup> *Kalith-thokai*, iv: 1-5; *Ibid.* xv. 1-7; cf. Kanakasabhai Pillai, pp. 42-43.

Her matted hair was tied up like a crown on her head, with the shining skin of a young cobra; the curved tusk of a boar was fastened in her hair to resemble the crescent. A string of tiger's teeth served as a necklace on her shoulders. The stripped skin of a tiger was wound round her waist like a garment. A strong bow bent and ready to shoot was placed in her hand; and she was mounted on a tall stag with branching antlers. Drums rattled and pipes squeaked in front of her image, while fierce Nagas slaughtered buffaloes at her altar. As the victims bled, the priestess got up in a frenzy, shivering and dancing wildly, possessed with the spirit of Kali, and shouted 'the cattle stalls in the villages around us are full of oxen, but the yards of the Eyinar are empty. Mild like the peaceful villagers are the Eyinar who should live by robbery and plunder. If you do not offer the sacrifice due to the goddess who rides the stag, she would not bless your bows with victory'." <sup>20</sup> Then oblations of rice mixed with blood and flesh were likewise presented at her shrine. Such was the belief of the people in this divinity that soldiers appear to have offered themselves as victims at her altar to ensure the success of the king's armies, and the latter granted the revenue of fertile villages for the expenses of her worship. <sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Silappadikaram*, xii: 22-39; cf. Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit., pp. 227-228; Srinivasa Aiyangar, op. cit., p. 274.

<sup>21</sup> *Silappadikaram*, xx: 37-40 and xxiii: 113-125; cf. Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit., p. 228. In modern practice, as well, the votaries often submit to the judgment of these oracles in the decision of their disputes. cf. Sturrock, op. cit., pp. 139-140.

Kali was but the synthesis of various local goddesses. <sup>22</sup> There were seven sisters of whom she was the youngest. In the *Silappadikaram* she is represented as the consort of Siva, challenging him to a dance, and tearing to pieces the powerful body of Taraka. <sup>23</sup> Muruga was her son who was also the heroic god of war. He had six faces and twelve arms; and he too demanded a kind of worship not unlike that offered to his mother. The priest uttered spells and prayers and slaughtered a bull at his altar. Boiled rice was then mixed in its warm blood and offered to the god amidst the blare of trumpets, horns, bells and drums, and the priest went into an ecstasy. In that state he danced, snorted and gave out oracles regarding the fortunes of the devotees. Kanakasabhai Pillai thinks that "many circumstances related of this god go to show that he was not entirely an imaginary being, but a war-like king who had been deified after his death". <sup>24</sup>

Thus the Dravidian gods continued side by side, on the one hand, with the primitive serpents, spirits, stalks and stones; and on the other, with the Aryan and Arayanised gods like Indra, Varuna, Vishnu, Siva, Muruga and others. <sup>25</sup> This meeting of the Dravidian and the Aryan was un-

<sup>22</sup> cf. Srinivasa Ayyangar, *The Stone Age in India*, p. 52.

<sup>23</sup> cf. Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit., p. 228. For an account of the 'Seven Sisters' see Elmore, op. cit., Ch. III, pp. 12-26.

<sup>24</sup> Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit., p. 229.

<sup>25</sup> Shesha Iyengar, op. cit., 110-111, 176-177; Srinivasa Ayyangar, *The Stone Age in India*, pp. 48-53; Slater, *The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture*, p. 50; Srinivasa Aiyangar, *Tamil Studies*, pp. 284-285; and Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit., pp. 229-231.

doubtedly facilitated by their common practice of slaughtering animals for sacrifice. But beyond this it is doubtful to what extent the Aryan and the non-Aryan met and exchanged views. "Whatever may be their present-day union or interminglement, it is difficult to imagine any original connection of the Aryan Brahmana and his subtle philosophies, with the gross demonolatry of the Dravidian people who surrounded them. Holding certain philosophical opinions, which they neither expected nor particularly desired their Dravidian neighbours to share, it is unlikely that the early Aryan theorists made any serious efforts to obtain adherents to their way of thinking".<sup>26</sup> Hence, it does not seem likely that at the time of the first Jaina impact, the subtle metaphysics of the Upanishads had gained any currency in the South.<sup>27</sup> On the contrary it is more likely that, owing to revolutionary changes in the North, sacerdotal Brahmanism sought a refuge in the South where, consequently, only the ritualistic form of Aryan religion prevailed until the days of the intellectual re-action under the great Sankaracharya in the eighth century A.D.

This was, briefly, the general condition of South India at the time of the first Jaina contact. But it is well to bear in mind, before we conclude, that the above account in no way depreciates the Dravidian genius or

its achievements in the past. We have already remarked that Caldwell's observations are primarily applicable to the most primitive among the Dravidian people. Later research has thrown considerable light upon the state of civilization obtaining in South India from very early times. Their trade extended to the Western countries beyond the seas, perhaps before the first Aryans came to the South.<sup>28</sup> Both prehistoric finds, scanty as they are, and the accounts given in the *Ramayana*, and the earliest Tamil works, together with the evidence of foreign writers, warrant the inference that culture was not the monopoly of the Aryan race alone in India. The history of the *Sangam* and contents of its extant works point to a state of civilization that presupposes centuries of previous development. In the words of Dr. Slater, "The Tamil language is extraordinary in its subtlety and sense of logic....The subtlety of the Dravidian mind is illustrated by the manner in which the negative form of the verb is obtained. ...The system of interrogatives, in a word, is as perfect as could be formed by the human mind....In Tamil music there are twenty-eight divisions of the octave instead of only seven. ...Indian culture, with its special characteristic of systematic and subtle philosophic thought, must have come from people capable of originating and developing it. That capacity would naturally be exhibited also in the evolution of language, and the present Dravidian language does exhibit it in the highest degree—in a higher degree than any other Indian

<sup>26</sup> *Census of India*, 1911, XII i: 4; cf. Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit., pp. 230-231.

<sup>27</sup> "Higher mathematics, Science, philosophy and theology in which the Indo-Aryans excelled all other civilized nations of antiquity were unknown to the Dravidians". Srinivasa Aiyangar, *Tamil Studies*, pp. 192-193.

<sup>28</sup> Mukerji, *A History of Indian Shipping*, pp. 89, 93 and 98.

language".<sup>29</sup> Likewise, Kanakasabhai Pillai has stated that "in the ancient classical Tamil works, the terms relating to music, grammar, astronomy, and even abstract philosophy are of pure Tamil origin; and they indicate most clearly that those sciences were cultivated by the Tamils long before the arrival of the Brahmanas or other Aryan immigrants".<sup>30</sup> The verification of the individual Aryan and Dravidian elements in the early civilization of South India is beyond our purview; but the above observations seem to be on the whole correct. The production of a work like the *Tolkappiyam* in the fourth century B.C. is in itself an undeniable testimony to the intellectual advancement

of the times. The rapid progress Jainism and Buddhism, with their appeal to the higher consciousness and keener intellectualism, made in the centuries succeeding, also bears out such an inference.<sup>31</sup> The existence of 'gross demonolatry' side by side with these conditions is not inconsistent, as this primitive faith has continued to our own days much the same as it was millenniums ago.<sup>32</sup> Hence, our conclusion that conditions obtaining at the time of the *Manimekhalai* and the *Tolkappiyam* could not have been far different is quite warrantable.

S. R. SHARMA

<sup>31</sup> cf. Frazer, "Dravidians (South India)", E. R. F. V., pp. 21-22.

<sup>32</sup> cf. Srinivasa Ayyangar, *The Stone Age in India*, p. 20; Sturrock, op. cit., pp. 137-140.

<sup>29</sup> Slater, op. cit., pp. 31-34.

<sup>30</sup> Kanakasabhai Pillai, op. cit. p. 52; cf. Srinivasa Aiyangar, op. cit. pp. 278-80.

## THE MESSAGE OF THE HINDU MYSTICS'

Mon. Robert-Edward Hart, the contributor of this paper, is the author of 38 books or booklets of poetry and prose, including tragedies, essays, and criticism. He has lectured extensively on music, literature, and medicine. Twice laureate of the French Academy and of La Maison de Poesie of Paris, he has contributed to leading reviews and newspapers of Paris and elsewhere. He has been the Head Librarian and Curator of the Mauritius Institute since 1923. Professor W. Lutoslawski holds that he has unveiled unknown subtle or lyrical parts of the human soul, and the late Professor Joseph Bedier called him 'the sweet honour of the French

tongue'. A translator of English poetry into French, he is, according to *Principal Poets of the World*, 'a living link between England and France'. A lover of Hinduism, he has published Vedic Poems, which will appear soon in book form and include an ode to Tagore. He is one of the leaders of the present Indian cultural renaissance in Mauritius. We are indebted to Mr. C. C. Pillay of Port-Louis, Mauritius, for the following rendering from the original French.—Ed.

THE study of Oriental poetry and mysticism, which sometimes intermingle as in the case of Jelal ud din Roumi or Tagore, has occasionally

<sup>1</sup> Read at Sri Ramakrishna birthday celebration meeting at Port-Louis, Mauritius, with His Excellency the off. Governor in the Chair.

given me the privilege of long conversations with spirits initiated into the secrets of poetry, almost a mysticism itself, and those of mysticism proper—the most subtle of experimental sciences.

It was thus that I had the honour of knowing the Venerable Mowlana Shah Muhammad Abdul Aleem Siddiqui, and the joy of finding in him a spirit superlatively liberated from narrow human limitations, and who spoke to me of Christ and of Gautama Buddha with reverence and authority.

Then, I enriched again my experience by exchanges of views with Swami Ghanananda, a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, and who, as such, would not imprison religion within narrow formulae nor remain indifferent to those of its manifestations extraneous to Hinduism. Let us not forget that, in his ecstasies, Sri Ramakrishna saw Jesus and Muhammad, and that Vivekananda, that being of flame and dew, took part in the West in a Parliament of Religions, where he paid homage to all creeds and where, in reply to a Western savant, he spoke in substance the following words, of which I keep a beneficent memory: 'If it is demonstrated to me scientifically and irrefutably that my religion differs from reality in this or that, I am ready to bend my religion to the exigencies of reality.' These are memorable and unforgettable words.

These unfettered men, these Mahadevas, and their faithful disciples, teach us the universality, not only of great religions, liberally interpreted, but also, but chiefly, that of Religion. 'The day will come', said Christ to the Samaritan woman, 'when you will worship God in Spirit and in

Truth.' Has that day come? Alas! ... But may be it is coming.

Truly that day must come in a world where the ravages of Mammon and of materialistic science, purveyors of negations and arsenals, have prepared the way to Karl Marx and to Slav or German Anti-Christ who apply historic materialism brutally or insidiously—the doctrine of chaos and of death. And in order that that day may come, we must, first of all, unite in a living synthesis of mysticism, poetry, art, science—everything which gives a superior sense to human evolution, all that saves humanity from stagnation or from inter-destruction.

For such is the 'life' which has been imposed on us: twenty years of stagnation and error, and five years of destruction. And they will begin over again unless they listen to the voice of the spiritual masters of humanity and prefer to the voice of a music-hall coxcomb or a cinema star, the prophetic voice of a Georges Barbarin or a Wells, who clamour to us that if we wish that life be worth living, we should first of all make a universal revision of human values.

I wonder what we admire more: the terrible truths with which Wells lashes us or the British liberalism which respects the extreme liberty of thought and expression of a Wells, whom a dictator would have caused to be shot without trial for the crime of non-conformity. 'Knowledge', once wrote Paul Valéry, 'is indivisible with this sort of passion which is the cause that we place the spirit above everything else, and with a general liberty of the spirit that calls for the liberty of the individual. ... All the values of humanity—everything that man has done and which has made



him man,—can subsist, that is to say, grow—only in the presence of living and universal conditions which a free spirit assembles.' And Valery believes that in the first place, because we defend liberty with spirits that strive to be free, we will defeat Germany enslaved by a State dogma which makes all citizens mere automata.

Be it as it may, England and the Empire, fraternally allied to France, are carrying on an Apocalyptic war against the Spirit of Darkness and we cannot ask them more for the moment. But when they are victorious, those who will return from the ordeal will have the right to ask of civilians: 'What have you done in our absence to ensure us a stable peace, some bread, a little leisure, a little Beauty, a little dream?'

Gentlemen, we inhabit a diminutive island, but admirable and cherished. This island belongs to an immense Empire, which is defending its life and its ideal against the most implacable of enemies. This imposes on us a duty, the thought of which ought to be always present in our minds, a duty of unanimous co-operation not only with the war works but also with the works of the future peace. We have at the battle front, or in peril on the sea and in the air, relations, friends, compatriots who have offered their lives to our civilization. If on their return, they raise this redoubtable query: 'What have you done to our small country whilst we were suffering far away?' we should be able to reply to them with dignity: 'This is what we have made of her: a country more united, more harmonious, more intelligent, nobler and freer. Even if we had but one soldier at the front, we should owe him this

transfiguration, for, to dare tell a young man: 'Make the sacrifice of your blood', we should be able at least to add: 'and we shall make the sacrifice of our routine and of our prejudices.'

And what will help more to achieve this than harmony between the religions, races, and tongues, which might make, if we did not take care, a 'Tower of Babel of this heterogeneous world? To harmonize these elements, diverse but not necessarily antagonistic, we shall never have enough tolerance, liberalism, culture, mutual respect, breadth of mind, serenity.

And since I am addressing myself mostly to the Mauritians of Indian origin, may I express to them my gratitude for having accorded me in their temples and assemblies an ever courteous, cordial, and hospitable welcome. I would speak to them with respect of the *Bhagavadgita* or the *Koran* and they would speak to me of the Gospels. Thus, I learnt Religion through religions and I remembered better that the Latin etymology of the word signifies the fact of *linking* men together and not disuniting them.

Gentlemen, there comes an age of maturity when the man who tries to think sees with joy the tumbling down of all the watertight partitions into which Society had minutely divided the temple of life. 'That poison called History', said Wells. I shall say in my turn: That old cannibal lady called Society, who devours her children in order to preserve for them a tender mother.

At the age I am speaking of, man is astonished to find how the History-poisoned people could have killed, tortured, imprisoned or deported one another, libelled one another, for

divergences, often subtle, of ideas, of sentiments, of orthodoxy, or of grammar. And the man who is thus amazed pays the Lord, the unique Lord to whom we give innumerable names, that He may allow us all, in the peace and joy of heart, to worship him in Spirit and in Truth.

This is an essential part of the message of Sri Ramakrishna, of Vive-

kananda, and of Tagore to the whole of humanity. And when a Yeats, a Romain Rolland, or an Andre Gide welcomes this Oriental message to transmit it to the Occident, there is a new proof that East and West have not unlearned the communion of souls in the universal religion.

MON. ROBERT-EDWARD HART

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**Sri Sarada Devi: THE HOLY MOTHER.**  
PUBLISHED BY THE RAMAKRISHNA  
MATH, MYLAPORE, MADRAS. PRICE  
RS. 3-8-0. PAGES x+ 532.

It is interesting to bestow thought on the exact position that the biography of a great prophet occupies in the mission of that prophet, taking it for granted, of course, that the prophet himself has left behind him no writings of any sort whatever. The example of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the saint of nineteenth century India, at once suggests itself to us. Sri Ramakrishna never gave lectures nor did he write books for the benefit of posterity. After his passing away, however, his biography was written by his disciples. His conversations and teachings have also been published. It is true that there are no books by Sri Ramakrishna, but how far do the books *on* Sri Ramakrishna help us to understand him and his mission? Two lines of thought are possible with reference to this matter. How indeed can a mere book, however well-written it may be, give us an adequate idea of a great soul? How can words portray life, and a great life too? Even a contemporary often finds it impossible to fathom the entire depths of a great personality. Even if an entire comprehension of a sage were possible, how can that comprehension be put down in black and white? Are not words but imperfect expressions of thought? Can one succeed in bringing to the mind of a stranger the ocean, any adequate idea of the watery expanse, by mere description? Can even a master-artist convey through a painted

picture everything that is to be known of a human personality—for example, the light of the soul that is in the eyes, the flush in the cheeks, the understanding in the face, the emotions in the mind? Moreover how can we be sure that the writer of a biography has been entirely objective in his portrayal? It is quite possible that he throws the covering of his own mode of understanding on the personality of the prophet, when he attempts a pen picture. And a prophet is usually composed of so many phases that it is not possible for any one individual to grasp his entire worth.

But there is another side to the picture. A biography is indeed a great pointer. It helps an intelligent mind to form some sort of comprehension of the subject of the biography. The four Gospels telling us of the life of Jesus are a fine example. Indeed these Gospels have preserved Christ for posterity. As we read the Gospels our devoted minds are able to visualize the scenes in which Jesus figured, and as we read the words of Jesus recorded therein we are able to reconstruct, in a way, his personality. It may be that our conception covers but a fraction of the prophet's personality. It may be that the prophet had features infinitely more significant than the few that we with difficulty comprehend. All the same we derive benefit. A man who wants to touch the Ganges need not touch it from the source to the mouth. It is enough if he touches it at any point in its long course. Therefore to the intellectually inclined, to the educated, and to the imaginative, the biography of a prophet is one of the best sources from

which a more or less accurate conception of that prophet can be gained.

But till recently, in spite of the bringing out of the very valuable books on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, there was a gap; this has now been filled.

Forming part and parcel of the energy that Ramakrishna-Vivekananda is there is a figure who has not been so widely known. This figure is Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, the consort of Sri Ramakrishna and his partner in his august mission. Readers of Sri Ramakrishna's biography may recall her name and remember something of the uniqueness of her relation with her husband. But justice has not been done to her—as it could not have been done—in Sri Ramakrishna's biography. Her worth demanded a separate and very comprehensive treatment. Only a few references and brief accounts relating to her can be culled from the published biography of the Master. And this biography stops with the physical exit of the Master. Sri Sarada Devi lived on for a long time after the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna. So a separate biography of Sri Sarada Devi was a long-felt want and that want has now been supplied. A full biography of the Holy Mother with her conversations recorded by disciples has now been published. It is no exaggeration to say that the publication of the book is an epoch-making event in the history of religious biography.

Sri Ramakrishna's genius was marvellous. He moved with hundreds of people, and the story of his relation with each one of his disciples is an epic in itself. The world knows something of what he was to Vivekananda. It can now know what he was to his wife.

A perusal of this book fills us with wonder and awe and hope. Sri Ramakrishna appears in a new light. No husband is so solicitous about his wife's welfare as Sri Ramakrishna was about his. But let us remember he was the prince of Sannyasins. Contradictions meet in Sri Ramakrishna. He was an ideal householder and would have beaten even the so-called successful householder in the art of house-keeping,—yes, even in its minutest details.

In numerous ways the publication is significant. The subject of the biography is

an 'uncommon' lady, and yet she is just a woman. She is out and out human. There is a sweet charm in the small details about her, while her personality in the spiritual sphere is superb. As a wife, as a sister, as a guardian, as a Mother to thousands upon thousands, as the symbol of the Eternal Feminine, as the carrier of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual ministry, she possesses qualities rarely met with; and yet do we feel her to be a distant unapproachable, a something that is too good for the humans and the mortals. No, she is simple, innocent, just a mother.

Secondly, the biography has been written in a manner that compels admiration. The author has taken great care to be helpful to all kinds of readers—to the mystic, to the emotional, to the rational, to the so-called non-credulous. Where 'miracles' are mentioned, the sources of information are given. Where a certain action needs explanation elaborate explanations are given, and the presentation is direct and simple and is in keeping with the unique subject of the biography. It is not a mere recital of facts that one finds in the book; one finds an explanatory, convincing, exhaustive study of a great life. And the conversations which form the latter half of the book help us to visualize the Holy Mother in her everyday life. The significance of her mission is very well brought out.

Truly this book is a revelation. Again and again as one goes through the book one stops in the middle for a while and gets lost in thought—the thought of the spiritual abundance and profundity that moved on earth as the Holy Mother. How near is indeed God to us! And how often does divine grace take form to be physically near unto us!

Sri Ramakrishna was a mighty banyan with two huge branches. One of the branches was Swami Vivekananda, the orator by divine right, the shaker and maker of the world, the awakener who raised such a huge noise that the sleepers could no longer sleep; his trumpet-voice reverberated unto the corners of the world; his energy penetrated to the remotest villages of India. The other was Sri Sarada Devi; like the jasmine creeper hidden somewhere in the corner of a garden, she lived and passed away; she went on no triumphal marches; but her jasmine-scent has

enveloped the world; her silent perfume is everywhere, sweetening foul atmospheres, illuminating dark recesses. And in the book that has now been published we get a glimpse—an analytical glimpse—into the depth of the perfume.

As we close the book a thought persists. Sri Ramakrishna was a versatile entity. And it has been said that each one of his direct disciples represented one facet of his character. The world stands to gain much by being told in what way each of these direct disciples represented the Master. Something in this line has been done already. The Life of the Master contains brief accounts of the disciples, and the writings and conversations of some of them have been brought out. But an account of them all in greater detail will bring to light many more points which will serve to show us the workings of the divine on earth. And to those of us, to whom books are the only *Satsanga*, such a publication will be a boon.

R. RAMAKRISHNAN, M.A., L.T.

**A Warning to The Hindus:** BY SAVITRI DEVI. PUBLISHED BY THE HINDU MISSION, 32/13, HAKIMJI CHATTERJEE STREET, CALCUTTA. PAGES xxv+154. PRICE, PAPER COVER Re. 1-4-0; BOARD BOUND Re. 1-8-0.

In this book a spirited attempt is made by Savitri Devi—a very cultured Greek lady who has adopted 'Hindutwa' for the rest of her life—to picture the dangerous political status of the Hindus. She puts up a strong plea to unite all Hindus and to remake India as Hindu India, and not mere India. In order to effect this the Hindus are to recognize a national religion which does not interfere with independence of individual thought, but at the same time supplies a common culture and civilization. The book on the whole is an argument to establish that Hinduism is eminently qualified to fulfill that demand. She says, '...Hinduism is the national religion of India, and there is no real India besides Hindu India.'

However, it should be borne in mind that it is too late an hour in the history of India to think of a Hindu India in any narrow sense. The political turmoil created by the communal tangle at present is a

painful reminder to all who indulge in easy generalizations. The difficulties that make the realization of such a Hindu India well-nigh impossible are too many and too formidable at present. So the methods for unifying India are yet to be explored, if those that are already known and put to practice by the Indian National Congress and similar other bodies fail to act. In a literal sense 'Hindustan' and Pakistan will ever remain an impossibility in this land if the decision is not going to be made by a civil war—which of course is out of question. How far the interpretation of a national religion as a common culture and civilization will be agreeable to the Moslems and how far the Indian Moslems will be ready to mingle the two streams of culture into a single flow reserving for individual choice adoption and practice of the creedal part of Islam and Hinduism, cannot be determined very favourably at present from the demeanour of the Moslems and at least some Hindu sects. No doubt the Hindus are still blind to prospective danger. If their social structure were much more humane and liberal, conversion would not have swelled the other religions.

The following sentiments would give a peep into the manner in which the book is written and the type of nationalism advocated therein. And they deserve the attention of the followers of the various religions of India, who happen to be nourished by Indian resources: 'But I repeat: We do not hate our Indian brothers, Mohammedans, Christians, or whatever they may be; we have no grudge against them. The only thing we hate is anti-national religious fanaticism, from wherever it may come. ...But whoever does not care for India and her culture, whether he be born a Mohammedan, a Christian, or even a Hindu, should have no place in the country but, at most, as a temporarily sojourning foreigner. Whoever loves any community more than India should go out of India.'

First, second, and third chapters of the book treat of Hinduism in general and its human value. The fourth chapter, entitled 'The Defence of Hindudom, a Danger Signal', shows the necessity of defence, offering for the readers' consideration the precarious condition of the Hindus in

various parts of our country. The point '*It is for social reasons*, and, practically, *for social reasons alone*, that thousands of Hindus have abandoned the Hindu fold', is brought home to the reader in the fifth chapter with the caption, 'Social Reforms'. Lastly, chapters sixth and seventh, which occupy a great part of the book, emphasize the necessity for the change of mentality among the Hindus, in accordance with the time-spirit, and demand the development of nationalism and preparation for resistance, in order to achieve the aim of the Movement and thus retard the rapid reduction of Hindus in number.

The stupor in which the Hindus have sunk for centuries, their contentment with not even the barest necessities of human life, their indolence to live on somehow, and their great indifference to matters national and political, the writer points out, have made foreigners to exploit the rich resources of our country and leave it in extreme poverty and misery. Therefore for national regeneration, unification, and organization of the Hindus, in all possible ways, introduction of necessary social reforms, acquiring of physical and moral strength, etc. should take place immediately, and rapidly too. The Hindus should regain the spirit of self-assertion and '...the will to live, not a weary scanty life, but a beautiful one...' The sooner the awakening of this spirit in every Hindu, the quicker will be the attainment of the Hindu solidarity. The book is sponsored by the Hindu Mission of Calcutta, whose worker and admirer the present writer is, and contains a powerful Foreword written by Sri V. D. Savarkar who has also translated the book into Marathi language.

**Buddhism: Its Doctrines and Its Methods:** BY ALEXANDRA DAVID-NEEL.  
PUBLISHED BY JOHN LANE THE BODLEY  
HEAD, LONDON. PAGES 299. PRICE 6 sh.  
NET.

In this volume an attempt has been made to give an objective exposition of

Buddhism as taught and practised in India, Tibet, China, and Japan. The opening chapter is a biographical sketch of the Buddha, and the six chapters that follow survey the whole range of Buddhistic doctrines and methods. They throw light on the path from 'Suffering' to 'Nirvana', so that one may trace the seed of suffering by the process of 'Interdependent Origins' and burn it up by the practice of the 'Eightfold Path'. The Appendices that follow contain extracts of important passages that have been alluded to in the Texts, and a brief consideration of the Zen doctrine.

Although the authoress had been unsparing in her efforts to have first hand knowledge of the original Pali and Sanskrit Buddhistic Texts, it cannot be said that the book can claim to fulfil any definite want left unanswered by the already existing literature on Buddhism. A sympathetic outlook, true scholarship, and a passion for exactitude are the *sine qua non* for interpreting the cultural treasures of India's past. A lack of these essentials to some extent is betrayed by the writer's readings of personalities and events. In her hands the sublime event of the Buddha's Great Renunciation loses all its spiritual radiance and becomes a tame affair, a case of 'a husband and a father of a son leaving his home and becoming a wandering muni'. More than the spiritual aspect of Ananda's discipleship to Buddha it is his bond as cousin that appeals to the authoress, and Ananda is referred to as cousin. In any religious literature one very often finds only what one looks for. With a deeper vision into men and events the book would have achieved a better approximation to Indian spiritual truths which would surely have made it more inspiring. However the book bears sufficient testimony to the interest and enthusiasm the writer has evinced in respect of an ancient spiritual culture which is not her own by birth.

The get-up of the book leaves nothing to be desired.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

**The Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service,  
Benares.**

**Report for the Year 1939.**

This Home of Service is one of the leading institutions of the Ramakrishna Mission. Started in a humble way in 1900, it has, within the past four decades, grown into a decently equipped Home for ministering to the needs of hundreds of helpless and diseased people from different parts of India. It has elaborate arrangement for giving treatment in Homeopathy, Allopathy, and Ayurveda. The following is a brief account of its activities during the year 1939. They fall under the following heads:—

**A. INDOOR WORK** (1) *The Indoor General Hospital* has 115 beds. The total number of cases treated during the year was 1,940. Of these 1,246 were cured, 234 were relieved, 170 discharged otherwise, 157 died (the death rate was somewhat high because, as it is said in the Report, dying cases were frequently admitted to give them a peaceful environment at the time of death), and 133 remained under treatment at the end of the year. The total number of surgical cases was 323, of which 183 were major cases. The total number of ghat and road-side cases admitted was 293. (2) *Refuge for Aged and Invalid Men*.—Though it has accommodation for 25 invalids, for want of funds the Hospital kept only 5 invalids during the year. (3) *Refuge for Aged and Invalid Women*.—This comprises 50 beds. During the year there were 25 inmates. For want of sufficient funds admission for many deserving cases had to be refused. This department is segregated from the male department and is conducted exclusively by lady workers. (4) *Lachmi Narayan Trust Fund for Paralytic patients*. Accommodation for 23 patients was made, of which only 12 were provided for under this Fund. (5) *Chandri Bibi Dharmasala Fund*. From this Fund 262 men and women were given food and shelter. There was no separate building for housing these; and so they had to be accommodated mostly in the refuge

for the aged invalids. The income of Rs. 273 per annum accruing from the funds were quite insufficient to meet the demands on the Home in this direction.

**B. OUTDOOR WORK** (1) *Outdoor Dispensaries*. The total number of new patients treated in this department was 76,996 and the total number of repeated cases was 1,42,650. These numbers included the number of patients treated at the branch Outdoor Dispensary of the Home at Shivalay. Taking together the figures of both the Dispensaries, the daily average attendance was 601.7. The total number of surgical cases was 1,230. (2) *Outdoor Help to Poor Invalids and Helpless Ladies of Respectable Families*. Under this head came 197 persons who received weekly and monthly Outdoor relief. The total expenditure incurred was Rs. 3,012-4-0 in cash, besides clothes and food provisions. (3) *Special and Occasional Relief*. Under this head came 1,230 persons who were given help in the shape of books and food. The total expenditure incurred was Rs. 274-6-9. Out of the patients served 67,554 were Hindus, 10,778 Muslims, 78 Christians, and 13 Sikhs.

The total receipts and expenditure, according to the audited accounts, for the year were Rs. 52,747-5-10 and Rs. 50,344-10-3.

The Home celebrated its 39th anniversary on the 13th October last. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, M.A., D.LITT., Bar-at-Law, ex-Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, presided on the occasion. The meeting was well attended by the citizens of Benares. Swami Avinashananda, Dr. S. N. Das Gupta, M. M. Pt. Pramatha Nath Tarkabhusan, and Ram Narayan Misra addressed the audience on the occasion.

**TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM.** This Report gives some information regarding the establishment of a Tuberculosis Sanatorium. Every year, medical reports show that the incidence of Tuberculosis is appallingly on the increase in our country. The facilities

for arresting the disease are quite inadequate in India as compared with those in the western countries. The Ramakrishna Mission has long been thinking of starting a Tuberculosis Sanatorium and the plan is now taking shape. The Home of Service at Benares is entrusted with the task of setting it up and managing it for the first few years. A plot of land, nearly 240 acres, near Ranchi, has been acquired on permanent lease for this purpose. This place is 8 miles from the Railway Station and 10 miles from the town proper, and is situated on the Ranchi-Chaibasa motor road. Tuberculosis experts regard this place as an ideal one for a Sanatorium. One Brahmacharin of the Mission, who is an M.B., has been undergoing special training at the various Sanatoria and Tuberculosis Hospitals in India, in order to take charge of this Sanatorium. The Home has already taken in hand structural and other works. The amount so far received is Rs. 32,000 and the amount promised is Rs. 10,000, which requires to be supplemented by at least a lac more for the completion of the project. The appeal of the Management for this urgent and important cause, it must be hoped, will meet with ready response from one and all.

**The Ramakrishna Mission**  
**Vivekananda Society, Jamshedpur.**  
**Report for the Year 1939.**

The Society completes the twenty-first year of its existence with the publication of this Report. The number of members at the end of the year was 432.

**THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY**

(1) *Religious Work*: On fixed days in every week religious classes were held, the attendance being fair and steady. The Society observed the birthday anniversaries of the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, and some of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. (2) *Library and Reading Room*: The Society maintained two Libraries with free Reading-rooms. The total number of books, at the end of the year, in the two Libraries together was 3,675, and the number of lendings 3,359. The Reading-rooms received 22 journals in all. (3) *The Vivekananda Primary Schools*: The Society conducted four primary schools and one night school. Of these three

were free and one partly free; the total strength of these was 369 and average daily attendance 320. (4) *Students' Home*: A Students' Home consisting of 12 boys studying in various schools was also maintained by the said Society which bore all the expenses of the Home. In the year under notice 3 boys completed their course and left the Home. In addition to the above activities the members of the Society did other social and philanthropic items of work. The audited accounts indicate that the financial position of the Society is not satisfactory. The opening balance in the year 1939 was Rs. 773-0-9, and receipts and expenditure, at the end of the year, were Rs. 6,722-10-11 and Rs. 6,420-11-6 respectively.

**The Ramakrishna Mission**  
**(Ceylon Branch)**

**Report for the Years July 1937 to June 1940.**

The present Report gives a short summary of the activities of the Mission in the Island for the above three years undertaken through its various Centres. The reports of the work done by each Centre in every year have already appeared from time to time in the columns of this Monthly. In the year 1939-1940 there were 18 schools and 2 orphanages under the management of the Mission. The total number of pupils were 3,279, of which 1,266 were girls. Of these schools two were Senior Secondary English Schools, one was a Junior Secondary English Mixed School, one English Night School, and the rest 14 were Tamil Schools. The institutions are spread over the districts of Batticaloa, Trincomalie, Badulla, and Jaffna. The Schools have produced satisfactory results in all the public examinations to which they have sent up boys.

**The Ramakrishna Math and Mission,**  
**Sonargon, Dt. Dacca.**

**Report for the Years 1915 to 1939.**

This branch of the Mission began work in 1915 and came to have a building of its own in 1919. Since that time it is maintaining a Free Reading-room which receives a few journals including a daily paper and a Free Library of over 600 books, registering 8,000 lendings during the period. In the current year 4 boys were kept in the

**Free Students' Home** begun by the Centre. Besides, 68 students were helped with books and school-fees. The Outdoor Charitable Dispensary treated about 68,000 patients, during the period. It nursed 30 cases of epidemic diseases and provided also some poor people with money, rice, and cloths. The Centre also did relief work during catastrophies caused by earthquake, cyclone and tornado, epidemic, fire, and flood. In order to intensify and widen the activities of the Centre it is proposed to celebrate its Silver Jubilee shortly with an elaborate programme including erection of a memorial building, publication of a commemoration volume, an exhibition of Arts and Industries, and other interesting items. For this purpose an appeal for funds is made by the committee concerned.

#### **The Ramakrishna Mission, Dacca.**

##### **Report for the Year 1939.**

This Centre did the following items of work in the year under review: The Homoeopathic Charitable Dispensary treated 13,232 patients—5,924 being new cases and 7,308 repeated ones. It distributed the collected amount of rice among 30 families every month and 230 families occasionally. During the year some rural relief work was also done. Four free primary schools were run for about 500 poor boys and girls. The two Libraries of 3,179 books recorded 4,482 lendings and the two Free Reading-rooms received 26 periodicals, including 3 dailies. The Centre conducted many religious discourses and lectures and celebrated the birthday anniversaries of various great teachers of the world.

#### **Sri Ramakrishna Students' Home, Bangalore City.**

##### **Report for the Year 1939-1940.**

The above Home, though not affiliated to the Ramakrishna Mission, yet is run on the lines parallel with the Homes of the Mission, by a local Managing Committee. From November, 1939, the Home is conducted in a building of its own at Visveswarapuram Extension. In the year 1939-1940 the Home provided free boarding and lodging for 32 students, studying in Colleges and for professional courses. Of thirty-two, eleven appeared for the respective final Examinations and all of them passed,

four securing first class. The Home is supported by public subscriptions and donations and Government grant. The opening balance of the year was Rs. 11,873-9-8, and the total receipts and expenditure, as in the appended audited statement, were Rs. 10,816-8-9 and Rs. 14,330-4-7.

#### **Mayavati Charitable Dispensary and Hospital.**

##### **Report for the Year 1939.**

This institution is a branch of the Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati. The Hospital provides 12 beds, and has an operation room and a small clinical laboratory with all necessary modern equipment. Of the 273 indoor patients treated in the year 1939, 216 were cured, 7 were discharged otherwise, 44 relieved, and 6 died. The total number of patients served during the year at the Outdoor Dispensary was 15,166, of which 10,812 cases were new and 4,354 repeated ones. The total receipts and payments at the end of the year were Rs. 10,971-5-3 and Rs. 5,659-3-10.

#### **Relief Work of the Ramakrishna Mission.**

##### **Report for the Years 1938 & 1939.**

The above Report gives a brief account of the relief work conducted from the Head Quarters of the Mission during the above two years at areas, in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, and Sind, affected by flood, cyclone, tornado, famine, epidemic, and fire. The following items of relief are recorded: Distribution of food-stuffs, cooking utensils, clothing, sowing seeds, and money and material for building huts and houses and medical aid. Altogether 15,906 individuals and 415 families were served. The total expenditure incurred was Rs. 20,521-0-6.

#### **Swami Ghanananda's Activities in Mauritius.**

The readers of our News and Reports columns already know about the activities of the Swami in this Island. The following is a brief report of the work done there from August, 1939 to July, 1940, excepting the Birthday Celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda which appeared in the November issue of this Monthly. During the period under review, the 13 Tamil Night Schools, newly started, had an attendance of 500 boys and girls and 60 adults. About 300 books and



a few magazines on religion and philosophy were placed before the interested readers. A small book entitled 'Common Prayer' was published with Sanskrit text and its meaning in Hindi and Tamil. The Swami gave spiritual instructions to 30 individuals and interviews to 2,415. Fourteen congregational prayers in Sanskrit, with exposition of their meaning in simple Tamil and Hindi, and twelve conversations in English, Tamil, and Hindi, on many philosophical and cultural topics, were held. On an average, the Swami spoke twice a week. The attendance at the lectures varied from 400 to over 2,000 and that at the sermons from 100 to 800. In the period under report, the Swami addressed altogether 36 meetings, three of them presided over by the Heads of the Administration, including His Excellency the Governor of the Island. These addresses were translated also into Hindi. Besides the above mentioned activities of the Swami, 25 lectures and 10 sermons were delivered by him in Tamil alone.

#### Results of the Competitive Examination.

The following are the results of the Sri Ramakrishna Competitive Examination conducted on 27-10-'40 by the Sri Ramakrishna Seva Samithi, Rajahmundry, registered under the Societies' Registration Act, Act XXI of 1860 of the Governor-General of India in Council.

#### SENIORS

1st Prize: No. 41, M. Obayya, Masulipatam.

2nd Prize: No. 6, A. Venkataramana Reddi, Tenali.

No. 47, Ch. Subrahmanyam, Nidadavole.

No. 92, P. Subhadra, Tuni.

1st Class: Nos. 4, 6, 7, 40, 41, 47, 55, 92.

2nd Class: Nos. 8, 32, 33, 43, 54, 65, 87, 91.

3rd Class: Nos. 1, 2, 3, 11, 31, 35, 36, 37, 39, 42, 46, 48, 51, 52, 53, 56, 59, 60, 61, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 88, 89, 93, 96.

#### JUNIORS

1st Prize: No. 80, E. Aswathanarayana, Madras.

2nd Prize: No. 100, C. Mahalakshmi, Kurnool.

1st Class: No. 80.

2nd Class: No. 100.

3rd Class: Nos. 19, 79, 81, 82, 99.

#### SPECIAL PRIZES

Girls: No. 91, D. Vijayalakshmi, Tuni.

Adi-Andhras: No. 40, A. Lakshmayya,

Masulipatam.

Muhammadans: No. 11, Md. Abdul Sattar Baig, Tenali.

Prizes to all successful candidates and consolation prizes to the others will be sent in January, 1941 to the addresses of the Chief Superintendents of the various centres.

We take great pleasure in congratulating the successful candidates, encouraging the others for better effort next time, and thanking all those who helped in organizing and conducting the examination in various centres in the Presidency. We hope that the high principles imbibed by the candidates during the course of the study of the prescribed books will stand them in good stead in life.

Secretary,

Sri Ramakrishna Seva Samithi,  
Rajahmundry.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI



VOLUME XXVII



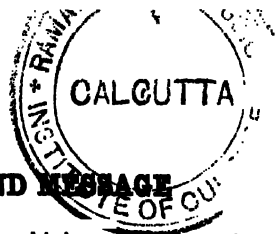
NUMBER 10

FEBRUARY, 1941.

---

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA PRAYED THUS

O Lord of the meek! O Lord of the humble!  
I have neither knowledge, nor devotion, nor the merits  
of austerities. O Lord, in Thy infinite mercy Thou  
must vouchsafe Thy vision to me. O Mother  
Divine! I want no honour from men, I want no  
pleasure of the flesh, only let my soul flow into Thy  
feet as the permanent confluence of the Ganges and  
the Jumna. Mother, I am poor and friendless, and  
I want no one's praise; only let my mind always  
dwell in Thy lotus feet. Mother, I am the instrument,  
Thou art the mover; I am the room, Thou art the  
tenant; I am the sheath, Thou art the sword; I am  
the chariot, Thou art the charioteer. I do as Thou  
makest me do; I speak as Thou makest me speak;  
I behave as Thou within me behavest; not 'I', not  
'I', but 'Thou'. O Mother, Who art the embodi-  
ment of bliss, Thou must reveal Thyself to me.



## SRI RAMAKRISHNA: HIS LIFE AND MESSAGE

This year the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna falls on Friday, February 28. We therefore publish in this issue a few articles touching upon the various aspects of his life. The following vivid glimpse of his life and message by Swami Prabhavananda may be read with interest on the occasion.—Ed.

### I

SRI RAMAKRISHNA may, without exaggeration, be called the fulfilment of the Indian philosophy of religion. He experienced the transcendental realizations of the seers and sages of the Upanishads, and in him were harmoniously combined the intellect and the wisdom of a Buddha and a Sankara, and the heart and the love of a Ramanuja and a Chaitanya. Not only do his life and his spiritual experiences afford an adequate basis for harmonizing the scriptures and the philosophies of India herself, but they bring together into a unity the truths taught by Christ and Mohammed. He did, in fact, travel every path known to the great seers and prophets of old, probing into the depths of eternal wisdom, to discover that all paths lead to one and the same goal. Thus he verified in his own life that the three great orders of metaphysical thought—'dualism,' 'qualified monism,' and 'absolute monism'—are stages on the way to the Supreme Truth; they are not contradictory, but rather when added the one to the other are complementary.

Sri Ramakrishna did not, however, found a new system of philosophy of

religion by combining what may be regarded as the best in every teaching and every teacher—as is done in eclectic religions—rather he accepted *in toto*, as we shall see, the teachings of every great teacher, and revealed their essential identity. In other words, his philosophy can be said to be the philosophy of harmony based on the idea of relativity. Any claim on the part of any teacher or seer, or of any one philosophy or religion, that he or it has the absolute revelation—that there is nothing more, apart or beyond—is absurd on the face of it. In the words of the Master himself: 'An ant went to a mount of sugar. A small particle of sugar satisfied its hunger, but it carried home another particle in its mouth, thinking, "Next time I will carry away the whole mountain." Such also are the thoughts of small minds. However great one may be, how shall he comprehend God fully?'

There is therefore no finality in the Infinite,<sup>1</sup> for it is the source out of which all philosophies and all religions emerge; and though all of them strive to articulate the Inexpressible, none of them can do so fully and completely. One can, of course, attain to the Infinite; but when he reaches that height, silent he becomes, and there is neither Hinduism, nor Christianity, nor any other religion whatsoever. 'A doll', says Ramakrishna, 'made of salt goes forth to sound the depth of the ocean, but it never returns to tell what it has learned.' And once again he says: 'True it is that the Vedas and the other scriptures speak

<sup>1</sup> *Bhagavaner iti karte nai*

of Him. But do you know what their speaking is like? When a man returns from viewing the ocean for the first time and is asked to describe it, he exclaims in amazement, 'Oh, a vast expanse! Huge waves! A thundering roar!' Like unto this is the talk about God. The Vedas declare that Brahman is Absolute Existence—Knowledge—Bliss. Sukadeva and other great saints, standing on the shore of that Infinite ocean, saw and touched It. Some say that even these great souls did not actually plunge into the Ocean—for whosoever enters into It never returns to this mundane existence.

The Hindu, or the Jaina, the Christian, or the Muslim, the Buddhist, or the Jew were to the mind of Ramakrishna but pilgrims travelling to the same Holy Land; only they travel by diverse paths. 'Various indeed are the paths leading to the Ocean of Immortality. Life is blessed, no matter by what means you reach it.' And again: 'Dal (sedge) does not grow in large, pure water tanks, but in small stagnant and miasmatic pools. Similarly, Dala (sectarianism) does not form in a party whose adherents are guided by pure, broad, and unselfish motives, but it takes firm root in one whose members are given to selfishness, insincerity, and bigotry.'

This ideal of harmony and universality has been the very core of the Indian philosophy of religion since its inception in the Vedas. 'Truth is one; sages call it by various names,' says the *Rigveda*, the most ancient scripture of the world. Sri Krishna emphasized this truth in the teachings of the *Gita*, and all the scriptures and philosophies of India have been guided by this same principle. Only

in medieval times, long after Sri Sankara, did some philosophers appear to forget the ideal of universality in attempting to uphold their particular doctrines at the expense of others; and the zealots grew bigoted as they established sects and sectarianism. Some trace of this sectarianism still remains in modern India though it is fast disappearing through the light shed by Ramakrishna, the supreme prophet of harmony.

Sri Ramakrishna's life and his spiritual experiences attest to the truth of harmony and universality as it is found in the pages of the Upanishads and the *Gita*. Mon. Romain Rolland rightly remarks: 'The man whose image I here invoke was the consummation of two thousand years of the spiritual life of three hundred million people. Although he has been dead forty years (now fifty-four—Ed.), his soul animates modern India.' And Mahatma Gandhi, the political leader of modern India, writes:

'The story of Ramakrishna Paramahansa's life is a story of religion in practice. His life enables us to see God face to face. No one can read his life without being convinced that God alone is real and that all else is an illusion. Ramakrishna is a living embodiment of Godliness. His sayings are not those of a mere learned man, but they are pages from the Book of Life. They are revelations from his own experience. They therefore leave on the reader an impression which he cannot resist. In this age of skepticism Ramakrishna presents an example of a bright and living faith which gives solace to thousands of men and women who would otherwise have remained without spiritual light.'

## II

Sri Ramakrishna was born of poor Brahmin parents in the year 1836 A.D., in the village of Kamarpukur, about eighty-six miles from Calcutta. His parents named him Gadadhar. He was left an orphan at an early age. He was sent to school, but he found more enjoyment playing in the adjoining woods. Very early he kept asking himself what was the object of this learning, concluding that it was 'to earn a few more handfuls of rice and an extra bunch of bananas.' So he refused to return to school, for secular learning no longer interested the young boy.

From this time forth he devoted himself solely to the pursuit of spiritual knowledge, often attending religious gatherings where, as is the custom in Indian villages, a Kathaka would relate stories from the scriptures and the epics. Gadadhar with his marvellous memory soon learned by heart whatever he heard—the lives of Rama, Krishna, and many of the saints—and with his playmates he dramatized and enacted them in the adjacent woods. And for hours at a time he sat under a tree in the cremation grounds, passing the time in solitary prayer and meditation.

At the age of sixteen he went to live with his eldest brother, who conducted a school in Calcutta. At this time a new temple was erected at Dakshineswar near Calcutta, the main shrine of which was dedicated to God the Mother. The young boy became chief priest of the Temple, and as he was engaged in conducting the services there, he again was assailed by doubts. 'Is there anything behind this image? Is it true that there is a Mother of Bliss? Is it true that She lives and guides this

universe? Or is it all just fancy? Is there any truth at all in religion?'

Theories were of no avail. If God is true, then he must see Him, for without God life was a useless burden. A great thirst seized the heart of the young Gadadhar to see God the Mother; and so praying and meditating, in the agony of his soul he would rub his face upon the ground and weep. When a whole day passed in prayer, and towards evening the sound of the temple bells reached him, he would sadly cry: 'Another day gone in vain, Mother, and Thou dost not come. One more day of this short life has passed and I have not known the Truth.'

Many months passed while his soul continuously struggled to find God. At last veil after veil was removed from his sight, and he came face to face with the secrets of Reality as he was merged in the consciousness of the Mother of Bliss.

And there came to the Temple a woman, beautiful and learned and of great spiritual attainments, a wandering nun who spent her time in teaching. Immediately recognizing in the boy Gadadhar, whom ignorant people had thought to be mad, a great soul, she cried, 'Blessed is the man upon whom such madness comes. The whole of this universe is mad; some for wealth, some for pleasure, some for fame, some for a hundred other things. Blessed is the man who is mad after God. Such men are rare indeed.'

She initiated the young boy into the mysteries of inner spiritual life, into the practices of Yoga, which he mastered and perfected in a short time. During this period, which lasted for six years, he passed his days and nights in ecstatic visions,

spiritual experiences, and a constant communion with God.

At a later time there came to the Temple garden a monk of one of the Vedantic Orders, who was well-known as a man who had attained the highest spiritual illumination. Totapuri, as he was called, seeing the God-intoxicated youth, became eager to initiate him into the mysteries of Vedanta. It was he who named him Ramakrishna. To the surprise of his teacher, the young disciple had already attained to *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*, the highest spiritual illumination, in three days after initiation, a state that had taken him forty long years to attain.

When he was only eighteen years old, and few recognized his God-intoxicated state, Ramakrishna's relatives believed that his madness could be cured if he would marry. So they found him a bride in Sarada Devi, a girl five or six years of age. As was the custom, the two were betrothed, the actual marriage to be consummated some years later; meanwhile the young girl was to live with her parents until she became of age. When, at this time, she learned that her husband was a God-intoxicated man who was considered insane by many, she desired to learn the truth for herself. Accordingly, she set out for the Temple gardens to meet her husband. Swami Vivekananda has beautifully recounted the story of their meeting:

'The maiden was a pure and noble soul, and was able to understand her husband's aspirations and sympathize with them. She quickly told him that she had no wish to drag him down to a life of worldliness; but that all she desired was to remain near him, to serve him, and to learn of him. She

became one of his most devoted disciples, always revering him as a divine being. Thus through his wife's consent the last barrier was removed and he was free to lead the life he had chosen.'

Thereupon his first desire was to learn the truth concerning existing religions. With this end in view, he underwent the spiritual disciplines taught by Mohammed and Jesus, and by realizing the truths of the religions which have descended from their teachings, he attained precisely the same results as he had experienced through the paths prescribed by Hindu faith. Thus, through actual experience he learned that the goal of every religion is the same, for each is trying to teach the same truth, there being but a difference in method and expression.

### III

Swami Vivekananda, his foremost disciple and the most celebrated of those Hindus who have helped to extend the message of India to the Western world, tells of his first contact with the Master. On first acquaintance there seemed little that was remarkable about him as he conversed simply and unaffectedly with those about him. The youthful aspirant drew near him and put to him the question that had been troubling him all his life: 'Do you believe in God, Sir?' 'Yes,' replied the sage. 'Because I see Him just as I see you here, only much more vividly.' For the first time, says the great Swami, he had found a man who dare to say that he had found God, that religion was a reality, to be felt, to be sensed in an infinitely more intense way than we can sense the outer world. So, day by day, he grew to comprehend how, by a touch,

a glance, spirit can communicate with spirit, and thereby an entire life can be changed. And skepticism fell away, and the truth as the Master said was revealed: 'Religion can be given and taken tangibly, more really than anything else in the world.'

One other thing avows the Swami, he learned from the Master, perhaps the most vital and wonderful truth of all: that religions of the world are not contradictory nor antagonistic to each other, but are phases of the One Eternal Religion, existing through all eternity and impressing itself upon the minds of men in various ways.

Swami Vivekananda then tells how the first part of the Master's life was spent in acquiring spirituality, and the remaining years in distributing it. He tells how men thronged about him, as he talked continuously for twenty hours in a day, and that for months at a stretch, until at last his physical strength broke under the strain, for his tender love for all men led him to help even the humblest who sought his aid. Even when a dangerous throat disorder developed, he could not be persuaded to refrain. Whenever he learned of one seeking his counsel, he insisted upon admitting him even though he found no rest. 'Sir,' one man asked him, 'You are a great Yogi, why do you not put your mind a little on your body and cure your disease?' To this, after a pause, the Master gently replied, 'My friend, I thought you were a sage, but you speak like other men of the world. This mind has been given to the Lord, and do you mean to say that I should take it back and put it on the body which is but a mere cage of the soul?'

When the news spread that the holy man was about to depart from

this world, the people crowded about him in greater numbers than ever, and the Master continued to teach them without a thought for his own physical health. Many travelled from afar, and pressed upon him with their questions. 'While I can speak I must teach them,' he would say. At last one day he told his disciples that on that day he would lay down his body, and repeating the most sacred word of the Vedas, he entered into Samadhi and passed away.

#### IV

Such is Vivekananda's account of the greatest saint of modern India. He further declares that his thoughts and message were known to a few capable of teaching them. After his death a number of young men renounced the world to prepare to carry on his work. Though attempts were made to crush them, they stood firm in the inspiration of the great soul who had gone before. These young men lived as Sannyasins, begging in the streets of the city of their birth, even though they were members of high-caste families. By dint of perseverance they survived persecution and day by day spread the message throughout India until the whole country was filled with the gospel of reconciliation. 'So this man from a remote village in Bengal, without education, simply by the sheer force of his own determination, realized the truth and gave it to others, leaving only a few young boys to keep it alive.'

#### V

Today, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa is known not only throughout India but everywhere beyond the bounds of that country. And this is

his message, in the words of Vivekananda, to the modern world:

'Do not care for doctrines, do not care for dogmas, or sects, or churches, or temples; they count for little compared with the essence of existence in each man which is spirituality, and the more this is developed in a man, the more powerful is he for good. Earn that first, acquire that, and criticize no one, for all doctrines and creeds have some good in them. Show by your lives that religion does not mean words, nor names, nor sects, but that it means spiritual realization. Only those can understand who have felt. Only those that have attained to spirituality can communicate it to others, can be great teachers of mankind. They alone are the powers of light.'

Again says Vivekananda:

'His life is an extraordinary search-light under whose illumination one is able to understand the whole scope of the Hindu religion. He was the object-lesson of all the theoretical knowledge we get from the Sastras. He showed by his life what the Rishis and the Avatars are to teach. Books teach mere theories. His was a realization. In one life of fifty-four years, he lived the eight thousand years of national spiritual life and raised himself as an object-lesson to future generations.'

Certain passages selected from records of Sri Ramakrishna by various disciples, especially from the *Kathamrita* by M., gives an account of his main teachings and affords an insight into the quality of his soul:

He who is Brahman, the Absolute of the philosophers, is the Atman, the Self, of the Yogis, and Bhagavan, God, of the devotees. The same Brahmin, when he is engaged in the temple, is called the priest, and when he

is employed in the kitchen, is known as the cook.

The philosopher, following the path of knowledge, discriminates, saying, 'Not this, not that. Brahman, the absolute reality, is not this, not that.' Thus analysing, he is not moved by desires, and attains tranquillity of mind, becomes absorbed in meditation on Brahman. He becomes the knower of Brahman. He becomes Brahman. He then has the true knowledge that Brahman alone is real and the world is illusory. Names and forms and manifoldness experienced in the universe are to him like dream experiences. What Brahman is, none can reveal by word of mouth. Being and becoming Brahman—such is the transcendental experience of a philosopher.

The devotee, on the other hand, accepts all states of consciousness as real. He does not say that the world is illusory. He regards the universe as a manifestation of the Power of God. The heavens, the stars, the moon, the sun, mountains, oceans, men, birds, and beast—all these, he conceives, God has created; these manifest His power and glory. God resides as the innermost self in all beings. He also transcends all. The best devotee goes a step further and says that God has projected out of Himself the twenty-four categories, and has become man and the universe. A devotee desires 'to taste the sugar, not to become the sugar'. He says, 'O Lord, Thou art my Master, I am Thy servant. Thou art my loving Mother, Thou art my compassionate Father, I am Thy child; Thou art the whole, I am the part.' He does not wish to say or think, 'I am Brahman.'

The Yogi, following the path of meditation, seeks to realize the higher Self. He gathers the scattered forces of the mind and



with a concentrated heart fixes his mind on the higher Self.

The followers of the path of knowledge regard the universe as a play of Sakti or Maya. Creation, preservation, or dissolution—all these are play of Maya. When analysed, they say, these appear as dreams.

But howsoever you may analyse, you cannot transcend the realm of Sakti until you have attained Samadhi. 'I am meditating, or I am worshipping'—such acts or such thoughts are within relativity, within the domain of Sakti. Brahman and Sakti in reality are inseparable. If you accept the one, you accept the other. They are like fire and its power of burning. You cannot even think of fire without its power of burning, nor can you think of the power of burning without fire. Can you think of the sun without its rays? In like manner one cannot really think of Brahman as apart from Sakti, or Sakti separate from Brahman; one cannot conceive the Eternal Reality without Its expression as the phenomenal universe.

Sakti, the Mother, is creative. She creates and preserves, and unto Her the universe goes back in dissolution. She is called Kali, the Mother. Kali is Brahman and Brahman is Kali—they are one and the same Reality. When I meditate upon Reality as at rest, that is, without the activities of creation, preservation, and dissolution, I call That Brahman. When I meditate upon Reality as creative, I call That Kali, or Sakti, or Mother. In either case I am concerned with one and the same Truth, the difference being only in name and form and aspect.

God the Mother has many aspects. She, as *Maha Kali* and *Nitya Kali*, is described in the

Tantras thus: 'In the beginning, before the creation was, when there was neither the moon, nor the sun, nor the planets, nor the earth, but only utter darkness, there was Mother, alone, formless, the eternal consort of the Absolute.'

As *Syama Kali*, the Mother with the dark blue colour, She is tender and loving, offering boons with one hand and giving courage and strength with the other.

In Her aspect as *Raksha Kali*, Mother, the preserver of the universe, She is offered special worship in times of famine, plague, and pestilence.

*Smasana Kali* is Mother in Her aspect as destroyer of the universe. As such, She is terrible, and unto Her the universe returns in dissolution.

Mother has within Herself the seeds of creation. After the end of a Cycle, She gives birth to a new world and lives within it. In the Vedas there is the illustration of the spider and its web. The spider weaves its thread out of itself and then lives upon it. God is both the container and the contained.

But forms and aspects disappear before the man who reaches the highest Samadhi, who attains the height of philosophy, the Vedanta as non-dualistic. The final conclusion of that philosophy, and the last word of spiritual experience, is that Brahman alone is real, the universe of name and form not real. So long as there is yet left a little of ego, the consciousness that 'I am a devotee', God is comprehended as Personal and His form is realized. This consciousness of a separate ego is a barrier that keeps one at a distance from the highest realization. The forms of Kali or of Krishna are represented as of a dark blue colour. Why? Because the devotee is not yet near them. At a

distance the water of a lake appears blue, but when you come nearer, you find it has no colour. In the same way, to him who attains to the highest truth and experience, Brahman is absolute and impersonal. His real nature cannot be defined in words. But, again, so long as you are real, the universe also is real, and the different aspects and manifestations of God are real, and the realization of God as personal is true.

You are living in the world; there is no harm in that. But you must have your mind devoted to God. Otherwise all is vain. Attend to the duties of the world with one hand, and hold God with the other. When you have done your duties, hold on to God with both hands.

By the mind one is bound; by the mind one is freed. 'I am a free soul, whether I live in the world or in the forest; what bondage can there be for me? I am the child of God, the son of the King of kings; who can bind me?' Thus must you think and feel. Even though one be bitten by a snake, if he can assert with firmness, 'There is no venom,' he becomes healed. In like manner, he who says and thinks with a firm conviction, 'I am not bound, I am a free soul', the same is delivered from his bonds.

(To Keshab Sen, the well-known leader of the Brahmo Samaj:)

In your Samaj there is the one topic of sin. The fool who repeats again and again 'I am a sinner, I am a sinner,' becomes a sinner indeed. There must be an absolute faith in the power of the name of God. 'Lo, I have uttered His holy name. Could there be any sin in me?' Krishna Kishore was a devout Hindu, a pious Brahmin. He went to Brindavan. One day,

as he was walking, he felt thirsty and went near a well. Finding a man standing near, he asked him to draw some water from the well. The man replied, 'Holy sir, I am a cobbler, hence of a very low caste.' Krishna Kishore thereupon said to him, 'Say Siva... Now you may draw water for me.'

The blessed name of God has the power to purify body, mind, and heart. Why talk of sin? *Resolve not to repeat the evil deeds you may have committed in the past and have absolute faith in the power of the hallowed name of God.*

I used to pray to God the Mother to grant me love and devotion. With flowers in my clasped hands I would pray: 'O Mother, here is sin, here is virtue; take them both. Grant me pure love for Thee. Here is knowledge, here is ignorance; I lay them at Thy feet. Grant me pure love for Thee. Here is purity, here is impurity. Take them both. Grant me pure love for Thee. Here are good works, here are evil. I lay them at Thy feet. Grant me pure love for Thee.'

Why cannot one realize God while living in the world? King Janaka did. Ram Prasad once said of this world that it is made of the 'stuff of troubles and disappointments.' But having attained love for God, he said:

'This very world becomes the abode of joy.

I eat, drink, and enjoy myself.  
King Janaka was a great potentate.

In what was he lacking?  
He kept the balance  
Between life in the world  
And life in God,  
And drank the nectar of bliss.'

But no one can become like King Janaka all of a sudden. King Janaka practised many spiritual disciplines while living

in solitude. Even though living in the world one should occasionally withdraw from it. In solitude, away from the noise of the crowd, one must yearn for God. Go into retirement from time to time, even for a day, and pass the hours in prayer and meditation; it will bring great good. Men there are that shed buckets of tears for wives and children, but who sheds one tear for the Lord? Difficult it is to keep our minds steadily turned towards God in the midst of the varied duties and activities of worldly life, especially in the first stages of spiritual growth. Hence the absolute need, from

time to time, of solitude. First, acquire right discrimination and true dispassion, and then live in the world. Know in your own soul that God alone is real; eternal; everything else today is, tomorrow is not.

Above all, learn to love God. Be madly in love with Him, as the Gopis with Krishna. You may not accept Radha and Krishna as incarnations of divine love, but take the principle of love they embodied. Strive that you may have the same yearning as the Gopis for Krishna. Yearn after Him and you shall find Him.

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

## AN APPROACH TO PHILOSOPHY

**Dr. P. Narasimhayya, M.A., Ph.D.**, is the Head of the Department of Philosophy in the University of Travancore. In this article he points out that the right key to the problem of Immortality lies in man's moral eternality. The famous *Kathopanishad* passage, 'He who has not first turned away from his wickedness, who is not tranquil and subdued, or whose mind is not at rest, he can never attain It by knowledge' (I: 2.24), beautifully bears out that great truth.—Ed.

THE *Kathopanishad* is interesting in its approach to philosophy through the problem of immortality.

It is the story of a young man who receives this teaching from the God of Life and Death. One day the young Nachiketas goes up to his father who is busy with religious ritual, giving away gifts of old cows and whatever else he had. The son asks the father 'Of what use are these gifts of useless objects,—of

cows past milking or eating grass or drinking water? Is not a true gift a real sacrifice on the part of the giver and a real service to the receiver? I am dear to you and to give me would indeed be a real gift. To whom would you give me?' The father replies in a flash of anger, 'To Death'.

And so in the realms beyond, Nachiketas is met by the Lord of Life and Death and is offered three boons as gifts to a worthy guest. Nachiketas chooses like a true son that the first boon be the assuagement of his father's anger; and as the second, asks to be taught about the sacrificial fire. As the third boon, he asks for teaching on the problem of survival. 'When man ceases to live, there is this doubt; some say he exists; others again that he does not. This I should like to know, being taught by Thee.'

The Teacher tries to parry this question. He would rather not too easily divulge this great secret and would offer instead all the pleasures of the world—kingdom and wealth and long life and all others. The pupil is young but earnest. He knows the changefulness and vexation of the pleasures offered. Even an endlessly prolonged life is not attractive in itself. 'Knowing what these pleasures are, who would care for a mere prolongation of life?' asks Nachiketas and insists on his choice of the third boon.

It is in this solemn setting that the Upanishad gives its teaching. It has so many aspects that one misses the forest in the trees; misses the essential point of the answer in the midst of all its elaborateness.

The main point of the answer is that immortality is not post-mortem existence, or existences endlessly repeated. It is a condition of goodness and all that this implies. What this implies is set out at length in the succeeding chapters of the Upanishad.

The question is lifted from the field of psychic research and eschatology to the higher realm of morality. A repeated cycle of life and its cessation is neither a great consolation nor the highest truth. In and through this cyclic process, a result is being developed which will cut through it and open the door to the true joy and freedom of immortality. This result is the growth of virtue, the 'good' (Sreyah). This touches the inmost reality of man and his world. It is an eternity far deeper and much more satisfying than the endless cycle or prolongation of post-mortem existence.

It is in the spirit of this teaching that the second chapter plunges at once into the moral inquiries regarding the pleasant and the good. The world is full of pleasures. There is no lack of awareness of this fact either on the part of the teacher or the pupil. Both realize the charm of dance and song, the grandeur of worldly power and the beauty of physical form. But there is also in the youthful pupil a robust realization of the fact that to make pleasure the guide, the light of our foot-steps, is to set the blind to lead the blind. There is no question of post-mortem existence, says the Teacher to Nachiketas, but far higher than this is the eternity of the good life. Externalities do not help much—not religiosity, not knowledge, not power of genius, and not even the sacred studies.

We are plunged into these problems of ethics and seem to be moving farther and farther away from the plain question of Nachiketas, whether there is or not a life after the one we know. But truly we are being led towards the deepest answer to it. The answer, in a word, is that true immortality lies not in the cycle of a bare eschatological immortality but in moral eternity.

\* \* \*

And then the moral teaching leads inevitably to the deeper problems of philosophy—the nature of the absolutely real and man's relation to it in virtue and in pleasure. Morality is bound to be questioned sooner or later: What is it more than a mere convention, a man-made regulation? What is it that our eternal hopes should be anchored in it?

These doubts surged in the mind of Nachiketas as he heard of the

moral approach to immortality. So when his teacher finished his teaching with the grand flourish, 'There, Nachiketas, is the house open for you', he asked him one more question,—the only one he was permitted to ask after his choices of the three boons.

This question was about the Absolute. The answer is set in four chapters touching on almost every important aspect of metaphysics. The pupil is told that by meditation and philosophic reasoning we may reach an ultimate reality which is the Absolute above all the relative predicates of our ordinary finite judgments; and that there can be no adequate name for it but some brief symbol like the 'Om'. The pupil is told of it as the one unitary principle of all matter and life, mind and spirit, of all things great and small; as the moral law and the

natural order; as the great peace and joy of the good life; and as the very essence of the rational spirit. He is told how like the pure water poured into pure water, the man of moral sensibility feels himself into the very heart of this deepest of realities. Virtue is its heart-beat, its very essence.

And so in virtue, immortality is grounded. The question of Nachiketas, 'There is a doubt regarding the cessation of life as the final end; answer me this', finds its answer in the depths of moral life. He is told 'It is not how *long* a man lives that makes him immortal, but *how*'. And this answer is supported—as it would be by no other—by an immanent Absolute, essentially one with our self.

P. NARASIMHAYYA

### **MAY RAMAKRISHNA RECALL US TO THAT WHICH WILL MAKE US MEN'**

In the May number of *The Vedanta Kesari*, while presenting a report of the celebration of the hundred-and-fifth anniversary of the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna at Paris, we had promised to publish the Presidential address delivered by Prof. Masson-Oursel on the occasion. What follows is an English rendering of it, originally given in French. Prof. Masson-Oursel is the Academic representative of the Indian Culture in the University of Paris and is held in high esteem by all European savants. He is also the author of *Comparative Philosophy* and other notable works on Indian culture.  
—Ed.

I do not know how I should thank you for the courtesy shown to me, but I do not wish to treat the matter lightly. I wish to regard it in all seriousness.

You have made me the President of this meeting. When I consented to accept that honour, I did not take into account what it really meant. I merely thought that I had nothing more to do than to express my gratitude.

I am thankful to Madame and Monsieur Sauton, for the kindness with which they have received us. But today's gathering is not an

ordinary social one. We are met under the invocation of Ramakrishna and yet I do not believe that many of us truly realize what that image represents for us.

If we are sincere, I think that none of us can remain in this hall; before such an image we should fly away, considering our worthlessness.

We speak here of the mystic life and we do not know what it is. It is a sublime and awe-inspiring subject. It would seem that we have come to get some idea of the spiritual life because the people of India are consecrated to the spiritual vocation and that with all sorts of motives. Now, in India, the priestly profession is regarded as commonplace. But I repeat that the Ideal that incarnated as Ramakrishna is awe inspiring.

I do not wish to speak here as a professor or an University man. For the time being at least, I do not wish to express anything but sincerity, because if I do not take up the attitude of a humble disciple, I can do nothing but fly as a worthless man before such an image, whose austere virtue annihilates everything in us which is not sincere.

The Swami has dealt with the subject of the true Guru. A Guru alone and not an University man can have some right to speak today in a befitting manner, in the presence of Ramakrishna.

If I do not shirk the responsibility, depressed as I should be by modesty at my worthlessness, the reason is that I have had, now and then, some promptings to the spiritual life. That is why I speak today, since the only way of responding to the confidence with which you have honoured me would be to present a humble confession as a tribute to the Master.

I admit that I have done nothing particularly good in my life; nor anything particularly bad. I know of only one among my acquaintances who has given up all that he had to the poor.

He is a doctor. He worked much, yet demanded little. It was with great difficulty that he could support a large family. His wife and himself had to bring up eleven children. Yet one day he decided with the assent of his wife to give up all that he had in favour of the poor—such a man alone would have some right to offer his homage to Ramakrishna.

I do not certainly come under that category. If the group to which we belong can serve some purpose, it will be to make us more modest and if possible sincere. I have just now spoken about the fact that I have had some promptings which make my presence here excusable, if not justifiable. I shall present my souvenirs in such a way that those who want may get an answer to that important question 'What is the spiritual life?'

Certain impressions I had as an infant have been turning points in my career. They have 'perfumed' my life, if I may use a Sanskrit expression.

'Holy sweetness of heaven,  
adorable ideas!

You fill a heart that can receive  
you

From your sacred charms; the  
possessed souls

Can conceive nothing more which  
can move them;

You promise much but give even  
more.

Your gifts are not fleeting

And the happy death that I wait  
is nothing

But a sweet passage to make us  
partake  
Of that which shall make us ever  
content.'

The same poet Corneille has given us these two lines, the second of which seems to me to be the most powerful and the grandest in our literature.

'The most precious goods have  
nothing comparable  
To the torrents of pleasure that  
expand in a heart.'

Marvellous! The Ganges, all entire,  
flows in a heart. Such can perhaps  
be offered at the feet of Ramakrishna.

He who has experienced these  
torrents of pleasure, has known the  
mystic life; the others know nothing.  
They have to learn. That they may  
learn is the greatest blessing we can  
pray for them.

And now I shall speak of the  
maxims which I have cherished  
during my long solitudes when I  
communed with Nature. Take this  
maxim of Seneca:

'Non est Subsecive philosophia'—  
Philosophy is not for leisure hours.  
Look at the tranquil self-conscious-  
ness of this sect.

'All men have fallen flat before  
pleasure except myself.'

Of the sayings of Marcus Aurelius,  
my favourite and the only European  
comparable to the Emperor Asoka, I  
shall present one. After speaking of  
martial courage and military prowess,  
he concludes thus:

'Sweetness and goodness are much  
more manly.' Also there is the idea  
of the acceptance of the destiny that  
Nature assigns to us, an acceptance  
which we should render as happy and  
free being: and not as resigned slaves,  
an acceptance of death like the fall  
of leaves in Autumn—early or late

does not matter. His time is come  
and he returns to Nature without  
ever having lived apart from her,  
happy in having fulfilled his mission.  
And these serene words have also  
reverberated in me many a time:  
'All that is good to you, O world, is  
good to me also.' Such words have  
called forth the strongest and the  
most intimate emotions in my life.

The admonition of Epictetus has  
found a response in me: 'My soul is  
the substance, which I have to work  
with, as the carpenter with the wood  
and the shoe-maker with the leather.'  
These seeds of truth have inspired in  
me the worship, if not the eager and  
exclusive practice of the true life—  
the spiritual life.

About the spiritual life, we have  
all sorts of false notions. Why should  
we conceive a total contradiction  
between these two lives? The  
majority of the people of India have  
attained to wonderful heights of  
realization by taking recourse to  
simple and vital means without even  
claiming to possess an immortal  
soul.

There is no need even to believe in  
a soul—much less in immortality. We  
have only to traverse a certain  
number of difficulties and to come out  
of them, if possible less weak than  
when we entered the path. To fly  
away from difficulties or to fear to  
live is cowardice—whether we turn  
round or run through them, we have  
to surmount them, to cross them. We  
should make these difficulties spring-  
ing-boards to increase our momentum.  
Spiritual life cannot be realized  
except through obstacles and contra-  
dictions. We find these stumbling  
blocks, not only in others and in  
nature, but in ourselves also. To  
adjust ourselves to society, whether

we quit it or not, or to the external world is comparatively easy; but the difficulties which spring up within ourselves are innumerable and persist for a longer time.

Have we to encounter any difficulties with regard to the Absolute? Never. Never. On the other hand, the Absolute is that which sustains us or is ever in us. The words of Pascal afford us a soothing balm: 'You would not have searched for me, if you had not already found me.'

None have convinced me of this fact as that great Durkheim. He throws into bold relief the infinite expansion of the individual consciousness which borders on a spiritual power to which I am united and with which I am penetrated. This is exactly similar to the experience of St. Augustine: 'In Him we live, move, and have our being.' You need not object that Durkheim meant society and Augustine, God. I shall complete the statement, by invoking to my aid Descartes or Kant who assures us that 'we bathe in reason'.

If you are deceived by words, you need not hope for spiritual progress. The 'power' which invades and dominates me is there, however you may call it. It is there and in me and I am in it. This is enough because it is all.

There is then another thing in me besides myself and I am elsewhere than in me. I am not alone; I am everywhere, in society, in soul, in reason, intimately everywhere, a living presence of which nothing can deprive me. I am not enclosed within this little individuality, Mr. So-and-so. I do not certainly ignore that there is a stage at which grace leaves us or that there are the nights of sorrow in contrast with the days of

delight; but these defects do not affect the Absolute. They pertain to me. It makes me more hateful when I separate my individuality from the Absolute.

We are then much more than we believe we are. This is the simple and inexhaustible theme of the Upanishads, of universal mysticism and metaphysics and also of integral rationalism. If you doubt this, read your Spinoza again and I challenge you to tell me whether he was a hundred per cent mystic or rationalist.

'We feel and we experience our eternal being.'

God and myself are the same. If you are shocked by this, by a sense of contradiction, because you refuse to surmount it, you are like the race-horse which timidly stops instead of surmounting obstacles. Let us understand that we should not negate the difficulty but go beyond it. Without *elan*, without boldness, you cannot make any progress. It is true that no one can comprehend the Absolute, but I know very well that even the most simple or self-evident judgment implies contradiction. The relative contains the same incomprehensibility as the Absolute. Only the over-scrupulous will cease to search because it is futile. The enterprising and the bold will march ahead and succeed.

The University training which extols the power of intelligence, of objectivity, may perhaps make me hesitate to think of anyone as a Guru. But Ramakrishna has taught us, above all, this boldness. He was not a disciple of the great Goddess, of Krishna, of Siva, of Jehovah, of Jesus, or of Mohammed. He has himself become the great Goddess, Krishna, Siya, Jehovah, Jesus, and



Mohammed. Let us cherish at least this teaching from the prodigious and inconceivable adventure. The spiritual life consists in traversing the contradictions of all sorts, those which come from ourselves, from our ignorance and incapacity, as well as from our success and foresight. We shall not be deterred by any of these contradictions. If we do not defy them, face them, we are lost. Let us defy and get over reverses as Mithridatus habituated himself to poison so that he need not fear anything. Let us do all that we can. It is by experiencing the sharp contradictions that we can develop our power. Intelligence and will do not grow except through these obstacles. Let us be happy that we have to meet the absurd, the hostile, and the impossible. It is a sign that we have something to do.

The mystic life does not consist merely in bearing and forbearing. We should embrace the vital rhythms. To despair while hoping is real faith. We should accept life with all its risks and falls.

What I may be lacking is in not having despaired enough. I have been rather over-elated. I have had a very even life; if I had fallen sufficiently low, I could have raised myself higher. But we need not unduly regret these defects. I have doubtless the pain of not having sinned much. He who has fallen morally can elevate himself higher. Do not the scriptures teach us that 'there is more joy in heaven for one soul that has repented than for those who have not sinned.'

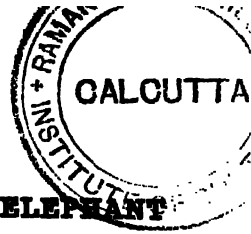
Do not infer from this that the way to attain spiritual realization is to besmirch ourselves. We are not like the lotus which remains immaculate even in the midst of the mire.

Among the maxims which have deeply affected me, I recall one: 'There are people who do not fear anything and yet succumb to everything and there are also those who fear everything, yet do not succumb to anything.' At a certain period in your life you have to fear. If you are not sufficiently high to fight, be prudent. Do not be like the moth which fears nothing and yet rushes into the fire and perishes.

On the other hand, there are obstacles which we should not fear. These are opportune, nay, necessary experiences, even though we may think them to be superfluous. In the light of Goethe's life, we can discriminate between these two. His experiments in wisdom are incomparable like those of heroism in Pascal or Nietzsche.—These three Europeans had no fear of trials.

Let them help us to shake off our apathy, our lack of practical reason. We are discouraged to such an extent as to kill ourselves. We seek for hope but we are not ready to pay the price. So we do not have even enough to subsist on; all these prevent us from responding to the call of the spiritual life. These are our difficulties, narrowness of vision and lack of fervour.

*May Sri Ramakrishna recall us to that which will make us men. I believe that the best thing for me now is to keep silence.*



## THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

The following famous parable was first given by Lord Buddha. We have extracted it from *Udana*, vi: 4 as translated by the Pali Text Society.—Ed.

THUS have I heard. Once the Exalted One was staying near Savatthi at Jeta Grove, in Anathapindika's Park. Now on that occasion a number of sectarians, recluses, and brahmins who were wanderers, entered Savatthi to beg an alms: they were men of divers views, accepting divers faiths, of divers aims, and by divers opinions swayed to and fro.

Now some of these recluses and brahmins held such views as these: Eternal is the world: this is the truth, all else is delusion. Others held: Not eternal is the world: this is the truth, all else is delusion. Others again held: The world is finite, or the world is infinite, or again Body and soul are one and the same. Others said: Body and soul are different things. Some held: The Tathagata exists after death: or, The Tathagata exists not after death or, The Tathagata both exists and exists not after death: or, The Tathagata neither exists nor exists not after death. And each maintained that his own view was the truth, and that all else was delusion.

So they lived quarrelsome, noisy, disputatious, abusing each other with words that pierced like javelins, maintaining, 'This is the truth, that is not the truth: that is not the truth, this is the truth.'

Now a number of the brethren, robing themselves early and taking bowl and robe, entered Savatthi to beg an alms, and on their return they ate their meal and came to the Exalted One, saluted Him, and sat down at one side. So seated, those brethren described to the Exalted One what they had seen and heard of those recluses and brahmins who were sectarians. Then said the Exalted One:

'These sectarians, brethren, are blind and unseeing. They know not the real, they know not the unreal, know not the truth, know not the untruth: in such a state of ignorance do they dispute and quarrel as ye describe. Now in former times, brethren, there was a rajah in this same Savatthi. Then, brethren, that rajah called to a certain man, saying: "Come thou, good fellow! Go and gather together all the blind men that are in Savatthi!"

"Very good, your majesty," replied that man, and in obedience to the rajah gathered together all the blind men, took them with him to the rajah and said: "Your majesty, all the blind men of Savatthi are now assembled."

"Then, my good man, show these blind men an elephant."

"Very good, your majesty," said the man, and did as he was told, saying, "O ye blind, such as this is an elephant!"

And to one man he presented the head of the elephant, to another the ear, to another a tusk,

the trunk, the foot, back, tail, and tuft of the tail, saying to each one that that was the elephant.

Now, brethren, that man having presented the elephant to the blind men, came to the rajah and said, "Your majesty, the elephant has been presented to the blind men. Do what is your will."

Thereupon, brethren, that rajah went up to the blind men and said to each, "Have you studied the elephant?"

"Yes, your majesty."

"Then tell me your conclusions about him."

Thereupon those who had been presented with the head answered, "Your majesty, an elephant is just like a pot." And those who had only observed the ear replied, "An elephant is just like a winnowing-basket." Those who had been presented with the tusk said it was a ploughshare. Those who knew only the trunk said it was a plough. "The body," said they,

"is a granary: the foot, a pillar: the back, a mortar: its tail, a pestle: the tuft of the tail, just a besom." Then they began to quarrel, shouting, "Yes it is! No it isn't! An elephant is not that! Yes, it is like that!" and so on, till they came to fisticuffs about the matter.

Then, brethren, that rajah was delighted with the scene.

Just so are these sectarians, who are wanderers, blind, unseeing, knowing not the truth, but each maintaining it is thus and thus.'

Whereupon the Exalted One on that occasion, seeing the gist of the matter, uttered this solemn saying:

O how they cling and wrangle,  
some who claim

Of brahmin and recluse the  
honoured name.

For quarrelling, each to his view,  
they cling.

Such folk see only one side of  
a thing.

*Quoted from the Pali Text*

*Society's translation of the UDANA, vi: 4.*

## GANGAVATARANA

**Sanskrita-sahiti-vallabha Sri T. Sundaracharya, B.A., B.L.,** of Shiyali is a noted expounder of Epics and Puranas. He brings out in this article some of the interesting and hidden meanings of the familiar story of Gangavatarana.—Ed.

**BATHING** is: the holy waters, worshipping the image of God in sacred shrines, and the companionship of

highly-evolved souls are the three basic means of purifying one's soul. Through these means one is enabled to skip over many an arduous stage in the course of evolution. The purifying influence of bath in the holy waters is highly efficacious, and its praise is sung in the *Rigveda* itself. After invoking by a Mantra some very holy rivers by name, it is said in that Veda that those that have

had bath at the confluence of the white and the black rivers (i.e. the Ganges and the Jumna) go up to Svarga, while those who are brave and who cast off their bodies at the same confluence shall attain immortality.<sup>1</sup> Water-mysticism forms an important feature of the whole of Vedic literature, and it is also what is least understood. The 'Apo hi shtha...' Rik employed in the performance of daily Sandhya-worship and a host of other Riks give to waters a benign potency which is not equalled except by that of the Highest. But confining ourselves here to the river-forms that are held sacred in India, we may say that the Ganges occupies a very unique position. She is the 'Tripathaga, par excellence, i.e., her purifying waters spread themselves and work wonders in Heaven, Earth, and nether regions. Both the Itihasas, the *Mahabharatha* and the *Ramayana*, contain a detailed account of this River-Goddess and the *Bhagavata* and other Puranas do not lag behind them in this respect. Even later-day Kavyas enrich their verses with frequent references to Ganga. For instance, in the *Raghuvamsa* of Kalidasa we have an exact paraphrase of the Rigvedic hymn<sup>2</sup> regarding the merit of bath at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna to which we have already referred.

According to accepted tradition, Ganga had a twofold origin, one from the divine foot of Narayana, and the other as the eldest daughter of the Himalayas with Uma as her younger sister. The *Bhagavata* Purana gives much prominence to the former origin<sup>3</sup> and the *Ramayana* to the latter. As we mean to concern ourselves here with the descent of the holy river we shall confine ourselves only to the latter origin and follow the account of it as given in the *Ramayana*. The story is told in several Sargas and is enshrined in the very heart of the 'Balakanda'. It opens with the question put by Sri Rama to the sage Visvamitra who divides his answer into two definite portions, the one concerning Ganga's upward course right unto the regions of the Gods, and the other her downward course, along this earth to the very depths of Patala.

*Ramayana*, Book I: Cantos 35 & 36 speak of the upward course of Ganga and her achievement in the heavenly regions. The substance of that achievement lay in the moulding of the not easily evolvable Tejas of Rudra into a divine personality fit and able to lead successfully the army of Gods against the formidable Asuras. The Gods who had hoped to effect such a purpose, merely through the union of Uma and Rudra soon

१सिताऽसिते सरिते यत्र संगये  
तत्राप्नुतासो दिवमुत्पतन्ति ।  
ये वै तन्वा अं विस्रजन्तिधीराः ते  
जनासो अमृतत्वं भजन्ते ॥

२समुद्रपत्न्योर्जलसन्निपाते पूतात्मनामस्र  
किलाभिषेकात् ।  
तत्पत्न्योर्बोधेन विनापि भूयस्तद्बुद्ध्या  
नास्ति शरीरबन्धः ॥

३तत्र भगवतः साक्षाद् यज्ञसिद्धस्य विष्णो-  
र्विक्रमतः वामपादाङ्गुलान्निर्मिषो  
र्ध्वान्धकटाहविषेरान्तःप्रविष्टा या  
बाह्यजलधारा तत्स्वरूपपङ्कजावनेजनादप-  
किञ्चत्कोपरञ्जिता अखिलजगदधमला-  
पहोपस्पर्शना अमला साक्षाद् भगवत्पदी-  
त्युपलक्षितवचोऽभिधीयमाना अतिमहता  
कालेन युगसहस्रोपलक्षणेन दिवो मूर्धन्य-  
वततार यतद्विष्णुपदमाहुः ।

found out the utter impracticability of it and requested Dhara (Earth) to absorb the Tejas of Rudra so that she being the *Sarvabhuta-prakriti*, might create out of it a fitting personality. This she was not able to effect and the only result that followed was the provocation given to Uma who cursed both the Gods and Dhara for their presumptuous interference, the former that no issue would be born to any Goddess by her divine husband, and the latter that she will undergo cataclysmal changes in her form, that there would be no love lost between her and her offspring, and that she will become subject to the overlordship of many. The Gods thereupon requested Agni to take in the Tejas of Rudra and try with the aid of Vayu what he could do with it. But Agni's experiments only produced a Sveta-parvata and a rich and shining meadow of reeds (*Saravana*), and the Tejas of Rudra remained in him unformed and like something abstract. As a last resort, at Brahma's suggestion, the Gods asked Agni to deposit the Tejas in Ganga and this he did. At the moment of its reception from Agni, Ganga assumed such a superb form that in the attraction he felt for its beauty and splendour Agni transmitted to her all that was in him of power and brilliance. The formative virtue of Ganga, filled as she was in every nook and corner of her manifold streams with the Agni-Rudra essence, moulded it into a personality of unequalled might and splendour. Then and only then was born the Kumara of whom the Gods stood in dire need; and even the irate Uma bestowed on him her maternal love and blessings. He was duly anointed as the divine general and he destroyed the enemies of the

Devas. So the Tejas of Rudra which successively eluded all other manifestations of Prakriti such as Dhara, Agni, and Vayu was caught at last by Ganga who gave it an individuality fully radiative of the high Tapas and spirituality which symbolized the union of Uma and Rudra.

The above anecdote of Ganga's Svargarohana and the part she played in the birth of the war-lord of the Gods are but the prelude to what was to follow, viz. her Avarohana or descent upon this earth and from there to the regions underneath. This was what Sri Rama wanted most to hear and here it is that the crown is set on the glory of Ganga's redemptive grace and purifying merit. The story begins in Sarga 38 of the 'Balakanda' and is carried on to the end of Sarga 44. It is sufficient here if we touch upon some of the salient portions to bring out the deep significance that lies embedded in the long drawn out narrative.

King Sagara begins to perform an Asvamedha (horse-sacrifice), which always marks the assumption of suzerainty on the part of the performer over his fellow rulers of Earth; and in the course of its attendant ritual the sacrificial horse suddenly disappears having been spirited away by Indra disguised as a Rakshasa. The sixty thousand sons of Sagara by his younger Queen Sumati, set out on the mission of its recovery and not content with searching the surface of Earth begin to dig her out in all directions, suspecting and killing every living being they met. The Gods much agitated at this go to Brahma and pray to him to tell them what this catastrophic happening to Earth meant and if there was no remedy for the senseless

digging and destruction. Brahma replies that the sons of Sagara were only hastening their own doom at the hands of One who is the real overlord of this, and other worlds and that the Great Kapila whom they were destined to meet soon, will reduce all of them to ashes. But the earth-digging in some sense shall go on for ever and provoke the operation of the *Kapila-Sagara-Nyaya* whenever and wherever a crisis is reached just like the one at that time. Thereupon the Gods go their way, their doubts cleared.

In the meanwhile Sagara's sons, goaded by the harsh words of their father at their failure so far, become much incensed and concentrate with redoubled vigour their digging efforts on the north-eastern corner. They reach down and down and after coming face to face with the elephantine forms that maintain the balance of Earth unshaken by surface upheavals, reach a spot where the object of the search is found near an Effulgent figure seated in deep meditation. It is no other than the Great Kapila-vasudeva, the universal spirit and overlord of all. Mistaking him for the thief who stole their horse, the sixty thousand in a body fall upon him only to have themselves reduced to a heap of ashes, even as the Great Brahma had prophesied.

Sagara, much concerned about the long absence of his sons, sends his grandson Amsuman in search of them and the lost horse. Amsuman finding out the tract his uncles had taken, reaches the very spot where the horse stood quietly grazing. But instead of his uncles whom he chiefly sought, what he sees is only a huge heap of ashes. Suparna who was his maternal uncle makes his appearance and

tells Amsuman of all that had happened and adds that no waters found in this earth, if used in Tarpana, would purify the departed souls of his uncles and that unless by some means, their ashes are immersed in the waters of the heavenly river, Ganga, there would be no salvation for them, blighted as their souls were by the Tejas of Kapila. Suparna thus sows in Amsuman's heart the seed of the Greatest and, at that time, the most unthinkable of events ever witnessed by men or Gods; viz. the descent of Ganga from the great heights of Heaven to the very bowels of this Earth.

Amsuman returns to Sagara with the lost horse, the delight of the recovery losing all its sweetness in the sorrow for what had befallen the sixty thousand. Sagara finishes the sacrifice, and not very long after, leaves this world with no hope for the salvation of his sons burnt down to ashes. Amsuman succeeds him to the throne but not to the despair of his grandsire, regarding the Sagaras. After making suitable arrangements for carrying on the affairs of the State, he retires to do Tapas determined to bring down Ganga to the place where the remains of his uncles were. Though he was blessed with a life lasting several thousands of years, his end comes before success could crown his mighty Tapasya. But his determination lives all the more potent. It is passed on to his son, Dileepa, and he perseveres on the same lines as his father, but only with a similar result. He also passes away but not the determination charged as it was with the Tapasya of two long generations. It is imbibed by his son, the Great Bhagiratha, who yoked with his own indomitable Tapasya

the *Manoratha* (earnest desire) of both his father and his grandfather. Whatever immutable law there has been that bound Ganga to her place in the heavenly regions, the time comes for it to give way, and the Great Brahma appears before Bhagiratha and says as much. After congratulating him on the certain prospect of his long-wished-for success, he enjoins on him to propitiate the Great Rudra, the Soul of souls, that he might bear the brunt of the torrential fall of the mighty Ganga, as none but He can withstand the impact.

Rudra graciously consenting, Ganga prepares herself for the fall. But an egotism which is always the forerunner of 'falls', fills her bosom also, and she thinks that Rudra is sure to be washed away to Patala by one of her currents. Far from it, it is herself that is completely lost in the wilderness of Rudra's matted hair. Poor Bhagiratha has again to pacify the dreaded Almighty who lets down Ganga in seven streams, one of which alone follows the course of Bhagiratha's chariot on its way to the scene of the tragedy. But on the way, Ganga even in that much curtailed form plays the mischievous girl and floods the sacrificial ground of a great Tapasvin, Jahnu, who, much annoyed at her pranks, drinks her up as if she were nothing more than a cup of water. Such is the power of Tapas, the first word with which the *Ramayana* starts and which also is the essence of its message. It is now the turn of the Gods to request Jahnu to regard Ganga as a daughter of his and take no serious view of what she did. Jahnu, much pleased, gives her back and Ganga after her rebirth from Rudra's head, gets a fresh one

from the ears of the wonderful sage and Srotria.

These two contacts which Ganga has as a result of her fall, the one with Rudra<sup>4</sup> and the other with Jahnu, increase her potency to an extent at which even the impossible becomes possible. The sixty thousand, reduced to a mere heap of ashes by the Tejas of Kapila are, at the very touch of the waters of Ganga, not only restored to their individuality but also established as Gods in heaven. Her fall thus is no 'fall'; it has only raised her purifying and healing virtue beyond all measure so that even the worst sinner, however much blighted or fallen, coming in contact with her waters gets his redemption and ascends to the highest rung in the ladder of evolution.

If, in the heavens, Ganga as Hima-van's eldest born was able to transform even the involvable Tejas of Rudra into a divine personality, she as the adopted daughter of Jahnu was able to perform a far more wonderful task in Patala; viz. of transforming into as many Gods the sixty thousand sons of Sagara even after they had been reduced to mere ashes by the supreme Tejas of Kapila.

Attention may also be drawn, in this connection, to the story of the *Mahabharata* where Ganga even descends to the level of a human mother bearing children in order that she might, by virtue of her motherhood, restore the divine Vasus to their high estate from which they had been hurled down by a curse of

---

<sup>4</sup> Ganga was able to re-evolve personalities reduced to ashes because of her contact with Rudra who reduced Kama to ashes and again permitted the rebirth of Kama.

Vasishtha whose wonder-working cow they attempted to take by force. The Vasus number eight, and seven of them were rescued, from human state, to which they had been reduced by Vasishtha's curse, by being throttled by Ganga and thrown into her own watery embodiment. The eighth, Dyu, by name, for whose benefit they all played the dangerous game of cow-taking she is prevented from so quickly acting upon as in the case

of the rest. But he, none the worse for it, becomes Bhishma, the Brahmacharin *par excellence*, the soldier and general *par excellence* and the true guide, philosopher, and friend of humanity for all times. In one word, Ganga and only Ganga deserves the Vedic praise bestowed on the most auspicious waters; *viz.* (उशतीरिव मातरः) 'like loving mothers'.

T. SUNDARACHARYA

## THE GREAT MASTER

**Mr. R. Ramakrishnan, M.A., L.T.,** gives below a lucid answer to the question: Why should we accept and adore Sri Ramakrishna?—Ed.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA was nothing if not a teacher. He came unto us of the earth with a mission, the mission of bringing back to man the consciousness of his heritage and the knowledge of the means whereby that heritage can be retained. The marvellous discipline he practised was not for his own salvation, but for the uplift of humanity. While others aim at swimming across the turbulent waters of life, he had to aim at transporting the waiting pilgrims across. He was therefore not merely a great Sadhaka or a Siddha, he was a Guru. Again we must not imagine that his career of the Guru started somewhere late in his life, after years of toil and preparation. In a spiritual sense, he was born a millionaire. Trailing clouds of glory did he come, and leaving behind clouds of glory did he depart. In evidence of the above claim that his 'guruship' was contemporaneous with his life, we cite a

passage from Sister Devamata's interesting book *Days in an Indian Monastery* which is full of lovely glimpses of great souls and sympathetic remarks on Indian life:—

'Someone asked the disciple, Swami Ramakrishnananda, when his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, had begun to teach. Swami Ramakrishnananda's answer was: "He was teaching from his very birth. His entire life was one long lesson." Then he added, "It was characteristic of him that he used the simplest language such as a child could understand, yet into that simple language he put thoughts that only a great sage could think out".'

It may however be interesting to judge Sri Ramakrishna by time-honoured canons, and find out if he had in him all the qualities that go to make a Guru. Of course we may anticipate the conclusion and say that Sri Ramakrishna emerges out of such a test with triumphant colours.

Sri Sankaracharya in his great work *Vivekachudamani* thus catalogues the essential qualities of a guru:



'He must be a wise preceptor, who confers emancipation from bondage, who is versed in the Vedas, sinless, unsmitten by desire, and a knower of Brahman par excellence, who has withdrawn himself into Brahman, is calm, like fire that has consumed its fuel, who is a boundless reservoir of mercy that knows no reason, and a friend of all good people who prostrate themselves before him.'

It almost seems that the above narration of the qualities of a Guru is at the same time a brief character-sketch of Sri Ramakrishna himself. So minutely and faithfully does Sri Ramakrishna's personality tally with Sri Sankaracharya's picture of a *sadguru*.

Let us attempt to substantiate this claim:

(1) Sri Ramakrishna was not educated or learned in the accepted sense of the term, but he was certainly full of wisdom. He was not versed in the Vedas in the sense in which scholars are, but he was certainly full of the spirit of the Vedas. The 'unlearnedness' of this great Paramahansa is perhaps the most astounding fact of his life. How was this simple villager who could lay no claim to book-learning whatever, able to quench the thirst of scholars steeped in Eastern and Western book-lore? How again do his recorded talks and teachings satisfy such a wide circle of men and women at the present day? We can only answer in the words of Swami Vivekananda. In a passage rich in sense and rhythm, Vivekananda, the youthful crusader against shams and lies and the ardent builder of the new humanity, who was Sri Ramakrishna's mightiest legacy to mankind, says:

'In order to show how the Vedic truths—eternally existent as the instrument with the Creator in His work of creation, preservation and dissolution—reveal themselves spontaneously in the mind of the Rishis purified from all impressions of worldly attachment, and because such verification and confirmation of the scriptural truths will help the revival, reinstatement and spread of Religion—the Lord, though the very embodiment of the Vedas, in this His new incarnation has thoroughly discarded all external forms of learning.'

Sri Ramakrishna's life was a protest against the false view that education was primarily an intellectual process, rather than a soul-process. His recorded sayings give us an idea of the profundity of his wisdom. We feel that within him was a rich store house of 'unlearned wisdom' from which he sent out flashes. He was not a student of this or that book; he studied the Book of Life.

(2) Sri Ramakrishna was sinless and unsmitten by desire. His only desire was to emancipate man. His sinlessness was a transparent reality, and ocular proofs could be had of it. He was a burning fire of purity. He was a fruit unspoilt by the peckings of the crow. His whole personality was so sensitive that the slightest contact with profanity engendered in him a physical shock. He could not touch or handle money—and this was in an age when money was being worshipped. Woman was to him the Mother. He had attuned himself to such a high level of immaculateness that his system was proof against the slightest of even unconscious swervings from the most rigorous form of righteousness. He was a living testi-

mony to the utter subordination of matter to spirit, of body to soul. His presence was in itself an uplifting influence, an antidote to sinfulness.

(3) The depth of Sri Ramakrishna's realization was remarkable, but even in this respect he was an artist. The natural state of his mind was the super-conscious one, and it was only by the creation of some desires that he could make himself available to the eager disciples and enquirers. He was a knower of Brahman, par excellence, because he was a Bhakta, a Jnani, and also a Vijnani. He was ever on the threshold of relative consciousness, at one both with the Absolute and the Manifestation, realizing the Impersonal as well as the Personal aspects of the Supreme, at home in, and familiar with, all the paths that lead to Godhead. He was always indrawn like an iceberg the greater part of whose bulk is immersed in water and only a fraction juts out above the waters.

(4) Being a realized soul Sri Ramakrishna was like fire that has consumed its fuel; Karma had no more hold on him. He was in the world, but not of it. Like a cloud that has no longer to wander, he was still lingering in the sky only to be pouring down the life-giving waters to the parched-up human hearts.

(5) Sri Ramakrishna's solicitude for the welfare of his disciples was immense. If the disciples were not regular in meeting him, he would send for them, or himself would go to meet them. No mother ever looks after her children with greater care, than he looked after his disciples. He would put up with insults, indifference, opposition; but would never give up those who came to him. His capacity

to save was frequently demonstrated. The example of Girish Chandra Ghosh is the best-known. He gave unasked. And the number of those that came to him and were satisfied is legion. He was able to soothe away the afflictions caused by worldly sorrows, and was able to confer divinity also.

In the case of a Master like Sri Ramakrishna, physical exit is perhaps a matter of no consequence. Of course those who were his contemporaries and were able to participate in the great Lila that he enacted were extremely lucky. For, Sri Ramakrishna's personality even in its mere physical aspect was a fountain of joy, and to be with him was to experience abundant bliss. His chamber was a fair where the Joy of the Lord was on sale as it were, and the price demanded was but a keenly felt demand! We are able to get dim glimpses of the wonderful atmosphere he wove around him, when we read the pen-pictures of M.'s Gospel. But yet Sri Ramakrishna's capacity to cheer and elevate was not limited to the time of his physical stay on earth. If he was an arch-guru to whom his contemporaries went for the food spiritual, he is still the guru and can still be approached and availed of by the generation that is behind him in mere chronology.

Sister Devamata thus describes an evening visit to the Sri Ramakrishna Math at Belur:

'As the boat pushed out into midstream again, the voices of the monks in the Chapel reached out across the water, sounding above the surging of the river and the splashing of the oars. They were singing in rhythmic Sanskrit the evening hymn. The boat moved

swiftly with the current and as we swept on, these closing words of each verse followed us with yearning reiteration:

"Without Thee, O Lord, we are helpless;

Therefore, O Thou Friend of the helpless, we take shelter in Thee."

It was a call to the Presence in the Temple.'

We too are pilgrims on the Ganges of life. And from out of the chapel of many a human heart pours forth the voices of prayer. May we who listen to the voices also join in the chorus!

As for Sri Ramakrishna, he is ever responsive. Night and day the door of his chamber is open.

R. RAMAKRISHNAN

## EVOLUTION: ITS HISTORY AND MYSTERY

**Sri Chuni Lal Mitra, M.A., B.T.**, presents in this paper a conspectus of views on evolution, at once interesting and illuminating.—Ed.

TIME was when people conceived of the world as an act of creation. It was believed that some being or beings created the world—the world with all its multifarious species, of animate and inanimate objects, of mineral, animal, and human kingdoms and even of all the social, political, and educational institutions that are found today. For instance, Linneans (1707-1778) believed in the separate creation of each species of plants and animals. In like manner Buffon (1707-88) started with a belief in the fixity of species.

But with the advancement of Science this theory has turned to be obsolete now. Investigations in astronomy, zoology, and geology, biology, psychology, and sociology show evidently the marks of evolution instead of a creation in time. All these studies unequivocally agree that the world is a constant process of change. Here society changes, custom changes, environment changes; races change, star clusters change;

and these changes are not abrupt, haphazard or chaotic; they change in a gradual, orderly, and progressive manner—this is the doctrine of evolution.

As to the principle of evolution—that the world is evolved and is evolving—there is no difference of opinion. But as to its nature and character philosophers are at variance. The two outstanding views on evolution are mechanical and teleological. The former view holds that the evolutionary process is blind and fortuitous; the latter maintains that it is designed, deliberate, and purposive. One holds it to be accidental, the other calls it teleological. Darwin is the chief exponent of the former. He thinks that the whole world with the entire paraphernalia has evolved out of mechanical process—by natural selection and fortuitous combination. Even inheritance of acquired character is explained by him as one of chance variation and natural selection. Lamarck differs from Darwin in admitting the modification by environment and transmission of this modification to posterity. With Lamarck, individual cats, for example, actually change the struc-

ture of their legs by constant jumping after their prey, and those changes are passed on by inheritance and added to by the next generation. With Darwin the change is not due to practice, but is an accidental one, having its origin in internal causes, in the germ plasm of the individual. The assumptions of Darwin are variation, heredity, the struggle for existence, and natural selection. The assumptions or rather the agents of biological evolution, according to Lamarck, are need, effort, exercise, and habit.

Weismann, as opposed to Lamarck, holds that acquired modifications cannot be transmitted to succeeding generation. Only spontaneous germinal variations can be inherited by the offspring.

Spencer has made an extensive use of this evolutionary principle. To him the whole world is a great evolutionary process. The materials of this process are found in Matter, Motion, and Force, which are not themselves ultimate relations, but represent merely the limits of our knowledge. In his words they are 'the modes of the unknowable'. The world as we know it results from the redistribution of Matter, Motion, and Force. Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion, during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation. Spencer applies this law of evolution to all social and political institutions, to our civic ideas and even cultural consciousness. Indiscriminately he tells us that it is the cause of all politics, morality, and even religion. Excitation and

exhaustion, strife and co-operation, work in social history. So also do they work in the whole range of human activities. 'Life', in his words, 'is a continual adaptation of inner to the outer.' And consistently enough he conceives of a social equilibrium. He looks for its advent in the remotest future. Adjustment of life with the environment is the core of evolution, of civilization, of everything else in the world. But Spencer's reading would have been better had he not admitted the cause of it unknown and unknowable. For him, but for the forces operative there, there is no further aim, no other 'telos' or purpose, the necessary upshot of which is agnosticism. But this is no explanation. As Radhakrishnan tells us, 'To be ignorant is not the prerogative of man but to know that he is ignorant is his special privilege.'

However, if we take stock of the whole result of mechanical explanation, we see that it fails to explain many things. It cannot tell us how life comes from matter and mind from life. It cannot explain what consciousness is. That it is a by-product, an epi-phenomenon, a 'tertium quid' does not satisfy us. If the world-process be at all a random exhibition, a sport, it must be a game of particular type, and consequently, must be methodical, orderly, and disciplined. Indeed, when life comes in and from it mind and thence consciousness mechanical explanation is proved to be futile. In the words of Eddington, the moving onrush, the 'go' of a living organism, the movement of an ant even cannot sufficiently be explained by the laws of physics and chemistry. A child's cry cannot be explained by the laws

of matter and motion. In short, *mechanical theory of evolution has not explained what life is, nor how it began, nor how does it reproduce itself, nor how growth and assimilation take place, nor why there is a struggle for existence, nor why or how variations occur, nor how species change into one another; nor has it explained that which is most important of all—the origin and nature of consciousness.* But this disappointment must not be construed as a fault of Science. The evolutionary scientist is rather a patient worker, content, to point out, if he can, some of the steps in the method by which Nature is working. It is not an explanatory principle but a descriptive reading. It tells us what is 'given' not anything of the giver (if any) or the ways of giving. Of the world drama, it takes note of what is in front of the screen, not of what is behind it. So necessarily it falls short of an entire and authentic explanation. But, gift or curse, the restlessness in man would lead him to give some explanation or other as a plausible one.

Some would say that evolution is 'repetitive'. It is what the writer of 'Ecclesiastics' has: 'The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done; and there is no new things under the sun.' But this explanation is nothing better than mechanism. Consequently, others would say that the truth is nearer what the book of Revelation declares: 'Behold, I make all things new...' The historical process has in it two elements of continuity and novelty. Every age is an age of transition. 'Every stage of it is at once a continuity and a crisis.' Nature has its own rhythm. Nature abhors repe-

tition. History is a going concern. Had history repeated itself, writing on history would have been finished some hundreds, thousands, or millions of years back.

So it is one of 'strategy' to some. Creation is birth of new things through the mutual services of pre-existing things. It is one of manoeuvring. But it does not tell us 'why' it should take recourse to such a special manipulation.

General Smuts affirms that the one universal principle which would comprehend the different sciences, physics, biology, and psychology, is that of 'Holism', or the tendency in the universe to the creation of greater and greater wholes. He attacks idealism by saying that mind is a recent arrival and the universe existed millions of years before its advent. But in its own way the theory forgets that when the idealist affirms the primacy of mind it is not the mind of this or that individual, but the Supreme Mind. And to reduce God to a stream of tendency, which Holism results in, is not to escape from naturalism, which is no substitute for religion, nor is it any final and adequate explanation of the world-process. Holism thus is entangled in its own inherent difficulties.

Both Alexander and Lloyd Morgan tell us of an emergent evolution. Alexander gives us a picture of a growing universe in which matter, life, consciousness, etc., gradually arise from space-time or pure events. The universe, according to him, is a spatio-temporal system, working gradually towards the realization of that ultimate perfection which he calls Deity. Space-time is the stuff out of which all existents are made.

It is universe in its primordial form. Time is the mind of space; space, the body of time. Alexander makes out that the whole process of the universe is a historic growth from space-time. The cosmic process, according to him, has now reached the human level, and man is looking forward to the next higher quality of deity. Religion, for Alexander, is the yearning for this final advent. Deity is a stage in time beyond the human. And even God, in his hand, is a creature of time.

Undoubtedly, in recent times, his is a valuable contribution. But it is not without its difficulties. To speak of a few: That every existent is 'expressible without residue' makes his philosophy crudely naturalistic, and it is quite opposed to the 'emergence' view which he accepts. If God is a future possibility, then religion, as a human experience of worship of God, is the worship of a fiction.<sup>1</sup> But, our unconsciousness of the Supreme need not be conclusive proof of the non-existence of It. Again, Alexander explains the following stage by the preceding one. Life emerges from matter, mind from life, consciousness from mind, and so on. But, surely, one chapter cannot explain the other. The first Act of a drama is no explanation of the second. Authors' mind is the real explanation. 'The order of our knowledge is not the real order of the universe.' Last of all, though not the least, the position of space-time in Alexander's metaphysics is ambiguous. It is an abstraction, an assumption made to account for concrete existence, and is not itself

concrete existence. Yet it is called the stuff out of which existents are made.

Thus arrives Morgan as an advance upon the previous position. Morgan asserts that historical process or becoming cannot be intelligibly described in terms of temporal succession. He admits a hierarchical order of new mode of organisation and compares it with the steps of a staircase. The world is in the making, and at every stage of the advance we find increasing complexity of staff and richness in substance. For the explanation of this process Lloyd Morgan accepts God as the basis (and in this respect he differs from Alexander). His own words: 'For better or for worse, I acknowledge God as the "nisus" through whose activity emergents emerge, and the whole course of emergent evolution is directed.'

But Morgan is not immune from having any adverse criticism. The objections that have been urged against him are these, that Morgan does not tell us whether the event occurs according to a determinate rule or is a process of free creation. He contends that emergent evolution is unpredictable. But is it unpredictable for human minds or in principle, and for all minds? It is said, that his acceptance of Spinoza's metaphysical view makes it difficult for him to believe in a genuine emergence.

Whitehead suggests an eternal order and a creative reality. He is clearly conscious of the futility of all naturalistic schemes and falls back on a platonic version of the cosmic process. He agrees both with Alexander and Morgan that we get more out of the universe than is already contained in it. But his is

<sup>1</sup> *Idealistic view of Life*: Radhakrishnan, 8.

an advancement in the sense of his acceptance of a peculiar relation of God with the world. And he calls his evolution 'ingressive'. The relation between God and the world is, for Whitehead, one of immanence and interpenetration. Thus he differs from Alexander in admitting God, and differs from Morgan also, in this respect of the relations between God and the world. 'God is immanent in the world and the world is in God. The relation is reciprocal. As God transcends the world, so world transcends Him.' Whitehead says that God does not so much create the world as save it. As the vision of the order to be achieved he is transcendent; as the principle of order already achieved he is immanent. He ascribes a three-fold character to God. God as wisdom, the primordial nature, God as love, and God as Judgment—'a conception strangely reminiscent of the Hindu conception of God as Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva.'

As a criticism it has been said that Whitehead's view is sufficiently metaphysical but the terms of love and tenderness he employs are not quite justified of cosmic elements. Again, God, in Whitehead's scheme, is affected by the process of reality. He has a past which is irrevocable and a future which is not yet. What happens to God when the plan is achieved, when the primordial nature becomes the consequent, when there is an identity between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*, to use Spinoza's expression, is not clearly brought out by Whitehead.

As an explanation and reconciliation of the controversy, Prof. Radhakrishnan points out that God is prior to the world not in the sense of temporal series but as the logical prius

of the world. Our moral life tells us that God is not only the goal but the spring and sustainer of moral effort. 'To see a rose we must turn our eyes in that direction. To realize the supreme spirit, a certain purifying of the mind is necessary.' As to the theory of evolution he is of opinion that it is no explanation. Evolution does not say why the process should have ever occurred, why life should occur at all. Survival of the fittest does not carry us far. Life has little survival value as compared with matter from which it has supposed to spring. A rock survives for hundred of millions of years, while even the oldest tree is only a few thousand years old. If survival was the aim of Nature life would never have appeared. As to the nature of the physical world he tells us that every event has both caused and creative aspects. Its changes are thus trans-mechanical. Scientific explanation finds its limits when we reach the creative side. Science cannot explain why matter should have two species of electrons and protons.

Bergson tells us that evolution is creative. It is neither mechanical nor teleological. Had it been teleological, a mere carrying out of a plan, the historical process would have come to an end long before. It would have realized its end sometime ago. It is the inner urge, or life force, or an upward drive that incites the whole species in a different direction. Teleology, according to Bergson, would be a mere substitute of a pull (attraction) for a push (impulsion). He brings censure against Darwin as well as against Spencer. He would perhaps say, that Darwinism is a failure and a fallacy, so much so is Spencereanism. Spencer began to

give an explanation of evolution but he ended, quite sadly, in merely recording the facts of evolution. His work amounts to no better than a store-keeper in a firm or a factory—one appointed in a Corporation, a Port Commissioner, or one appointed in an Improvement Trust Company, whose only task is to keep an account of the commodities or furnitures that have reached there. He is not concerned with the questions where do these come from, where do they grow, how much do they cost, or what is their duty-tax. He is not acquainted with the whereabouts of the articles. So was the position of Spencer. And, according to Bergson, it would be too poor an attempt if he goes to explain the life-history of them. We agree with Bergson. But, even then, in strict reverence for Spencer we can say that he cannot do better. As a store-keeper even his service is valuable. It is of abiding interest to us and paramount importance for others. For, if he goes to have the life-history—the course and the cause of evolution—he would prove himself a failure in his service as a store-keeper.

According to Bergson then determination by the future is as much determined as determination by the past. 'Teleology is inverted mechanism.' It substitutes a push for a pull. But the world is absolutely indetermined and free. Evolution is neither mechanical nor teleological, but creative. Life is creative, world is romantic—a ceaseless advance towards the new. Life, according to him, is a continual flow and flux. It is pure duration as distinguished from mathematical time. Every moment is new, novel and different from what it was before. No following event can be explained by any preceding

one. In fact, the whole trend of his argument tends towards this direction—an explanation of life. And he tells us definitely that no other principle than his *elan vital*, the creative surge, the vital impulse, can explain life. Events are neither illumined instinct and spontaneous, nor designed, deliberate, and intellectual. They are creative. We are creating ourselves continually. Throughout the entire ranges of all his work<sup>2</sup> he voices this single, simple idea. And whatever metaphors he brings forward are meant to give an explanation of life. Undoubtedly his is a philosophy of life. But himself he is an intellectualist. For, his *Creative Evolution*, the monumental work, is more an intellectual excursion than an 'intuitive creation'.

But as against his philosophy and his philosophy of evolution the old criticism of Aristotle against Heraclitus is still significant—that 'continual and endless flux makes good no better nor white any whiter'. But even then, we can say without the least hesitation and without any fear of opposition that Bergson's contribution to this aspect is a landmark in the whole arena of philosophic thought—both in our days and in the days by-gone. Though his is no adequate explanation of life, it is at least an admission of life and never a negation. He has stressed on the unpredictability of the evolutionary process. In this respect to be faithful to the exact reading of life and life-activities he is consistent. And if Bergson's attempt merely ends in substitution of words and formulation of ingenious similies he is also to be

---

<sup>2</sup> The creative Evolution, Matter and Memory, Time and Freewill, etc.



credited only because we have not yet any better substitution, any more faithful account of life. For, what explanation can it have but that it defies explanation!

It is expedient on our part to land on the explanation of this process of evolution by the Indian thinkers long before the westerners thought upon it. The Sankhya theory of evolution has got certain special features. It is based on a belief in the indestructibility of matter and the pre-existence of force. Something cannot come out of nothing, and whatever is has always been. Production is only the manifestation (abhivyakti) of what is already in a latent form, and is not a new creation (arambha). The so-called beginning of an object is only an event in its history; the object itself is not, and cannot be, made. Evolution and involution, manifestation and dissolution, are the continual processes. Eleven Indriyas or sense-organs (including Manas), Antahkarana, and Buddhi represent successive stages in the evolution of the universe from Prakriti. Prakriti contains within itself the possibility of all things. And the Prakriti of Sankhya is only another name of the Maya of Vedanta. Effectuation is not origination. It is not Utpatti but Abhivyakti. It is at once towards creation and towards cessation—at once Sadrissha and Visadrisha,—from like to like and from like to unlike.<sup>3</sup> Destruction means going back to the cause and the effect is the cause in another form. Things only involve and evolve. These are known in Sanskrit as Sankocha and Vikasha. It is an eternal process; its beginning in time is an absurdity. This is a better

explanation than any other hitherto said. Sri Ramakrishna used to say: 'These acts of creation, preservation and destruction, which are going on constantly, are due to His power. This primordial power and Brahman are inseparable. One cannot exist without the other. Just as waves can have no existence without water, or music without musical instrument.'<sup>4</sup> These are just the words of Vedanta. Unfoldment and reabsorption are the constant processes of the universe. *Bhagavata* gives a richer explanation in its conception of Lila. A. R. Wallace in his *Man's place in the Universe* says that 'Many educated readers will be surprised to find that even such apparently simple a phenomenon as the rise of sap in trees, is not yet completely explained. As to the deeper problems of life and growth and reproduction, though our physiologists have learned an infinite amount of curious or instructive fact, they can give us no intelligible explanation of them.' Santayana's remark is not without its significance here that,—

'It is not wisdom to be only wise,  
But it is wisdom to believe the heart.

Columbus found the world, and  
had no chart,

Save one that faith, ...

Was all his Science and his only art.'

But, such philosophy of faith also does not lead us far. Faith is no explanation of reason, nor is reason of faith. And the world-processes have these two aspects all at a time. Nay, more. It is to be explained in terms of 'values'. Life is a value, mind is one such. Social institution

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Maitra, S. K.

<sup>4</sup> *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*.

is one, consciousness is another. So on. 'The truth of the universe is not a mathematical equation, or a kinematical system, or a biological adjustment, or a psychological pluralism, or an ethical individualism, but a spiritual organism.' Knowledge of ourselves as ethical beings may be much clearer than that of the world as spirit and 'yet it is this mysterious (spiritual) unclear and inarticulate knowledge that brings us closest to reality. We conclude with Hegal

that, 'Art, Religion, and philosophy are the values towards which the world is striving', and at the risk of repetition we once again add that *evolution is no explanation but a principle and a method towards explanation and in spite of the inherent pitfalls of the theory itself the Hindus advanced a better plausible explanation in complete consonance with modern thoughts.*

CHUNILAL MITRA

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**At the Touch of the Philosopher's Stone (A Drama in Five Acts):** PUBLISHED BY THE GITA PRESS, GORAKHPUR, INDIA. 1937. PAGES xvi+128. PRICE AS. 9.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was spreading the gospel of Divine love through his words and example in Bengal when Nawab Hossain Shaw was ruling part of that Province, then known as Gour. In an illustrious family much favoured by the Nawab there lived at that time three brothers, Rupa, Sanatana, and Vallabha. Drawn by Sri Chaitanya's miraculous God-intoxication Rupa and Vallabha gave up household life and embraced Sannyasa. Their deep and pure devotion to the Lord and attractive character endeared them to Sri Chaitanya immensely, and at his behest Rupa repaired to Vrindavana and led a profoundly pious life, entirely devoting himself to the service of Lord Krishna and writing 'a book on devotion as a means of giving immortality to thousands'; and Vallabha, the youngest brother, who accompanied him was in charge of the temple of Madanamohana.

Efficient and erudite, Sanatana received the special favour of the Nawab who made him his Wasir, looked upon him as his own son, and conferred upon him wealth and position that would be the envy of people around him. The grace of Sri Chaitanya worked a great change in Sanatana's heart, and he too felt a burning

thirst for Lord Gauranga's mode of life. 'Mysterious, indeed, are the waves of the Ocean of Love.' Vallabha communicated to him Lord Gauranga's love for him and stated that he would accept him only when he has completely got rid of the sense of possession. He received also a letter from Rupa from Vrindavana reminding of the impermanence of all worldly pelf and need of surrender to God. Sanatana now turned his back upon his wealth and position, directing his trusted servant thus: 'Ishan, I am going away; tell the Manager to tear off the documents drawn by all my debtors. You please take care of your mother and tell her that she may give away my all to the poor, leaving only a paltry sum for her bare maintenance.'

Noticing this sudden change in his able and reliable officer the Nawab who had committed to him high responsibilities of the State, and who required his assistance, as he was surrounded by enemies at that time, first tried to dissuade him from his religious inclinations; but when he found that he remained adamant, as he was overpowered by the Divine Call, Sanatana was thrown into the worm-infested cells of a prison with no food other than gram and water. The walls of prison cast no gloom over his mind immersed in Divine love; it opened for him only a new channel of Divine grace as was clear from the change of mind brought about in two of the

jailors, Ramdin and Naseer Khan, who also were transformed by the power of divine love spread by Sri Chaitanya. They flung open the jail doors and cut asunder the fetters of Sanatana who found himself henceforward in no confinement. Sanatana hastened to Benares where he met Sri Chaitanya who received him warmly and ordered him to stay for the rest of his life at Vrindavana, solely devoting himself to the worship and love of Sri Krishna.

This is, in outline, the plot of the well-known Bengali Play *Rup-Sanatana* written by the late Mr. Girishchandra Ghosh, a free English translation of which (slightly modified to suit the English reading public) is given in the book before us. This highly dramatic episode has been worked with consummate skill by Mr. Ghosh, the foremost actor-dramatist of Bengal, and made specially attractive to the religious-minded audience. The dramatic genius of Mr. Ghosh underwent a wonderful change from the time he came under the gradually expanding spiritual influence of Sri Ramakrishna, whom he considered as his master and adored as a divine incarnation. The subtle influence of the Master's living touch has imparted to all his subsequent Plays a holy charm. For instance, in the present Play, mark Sanatana's words to Alaka, his wife; 'From egoism comes the sense of duty; the thought "I am agent" is the magic play of Maya. Only through delusion comes the distinction between "I" and "Thou". The whole universe belongs to Him.' These lines read almost like a passage of Sri Ramakrishna's Teachings. So utter was Sri Ramakrishna's renunciation of worldly wealth that even if somebody hid a coin under his bed he would feel a torment. Certainly Mr. Ghosh must have had in mind this fact when he portrayed the inability of Sanatana to proceed on the road to Benares because his servant Ishan had hid a few gold mohurs in his cloth for passage. In this age, Sri Ramakrishna insisted, the Name of the Lord and unswerving devotion to truth alone would suffice for God-realisation. What a great devotion Sanatana had for truth is evident from his words spoken to Ramdin (p. 77) when the jailors set him free. These and other points such as the utter humility and self-forgetting

Divine absorption of Sri Chaitanya, the transformation that Divine love brought on most of the dramatis personae, Alaka, Karuna, and Visakha—the wives of the three brothers—Naseer, and even Jivana Chakravarty who hankered for the Philosopher's Stone but subsequently turned his mind to God, all so brilliantly brought out by the masterly characterization, make the drama a first-rate religious production; and it accrues to the credit of the Publishers that it has been now made available for a wider public through the medium of English, even though all the beauties of the original may not be reflected in the translation. A short introduction gives the historical background, enabling the reader to understand the drama easily. The book contains five attractive tri-coloured illustrations.

Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute: PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES IN A YEAR, IN THE MONTHS OF DECEMBER, MARCH, JUNE, AND SEPTEMBER. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RS. 12. SUBSCRIBERS SHOULD REGISTER THEIR NAMES WITH THE REGISTRAR, DECCAN COLLEGE POSTGRADUATE AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE, POONA 1.

'The Bulletin is the official organ of the Deccan College, newly revived by the Government of Bombay as the Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute.' The first and second numbers of Volume Two are before us. We welcome this new publication which brings out the literary contributions embodying the results of the researches conducted by the scholars connected with the above-mentioned Institution, for which purpose it is exclusively devoted. 'The Deccan College: Its Past History and Future Hopes', 'Kinship Terminology and Kinship Usages of the Maratha Country', 'Were Castes formulated in the Age of the Rigveda?', 'Studies in Nagarjunakonda Sculptures', 'Some Important Personalities of Bagdad', 'The Srauta Counterpart of Godana Ceremony', 'Gupta Inscriptions and the Pauranic Tradition', 'Contributions on the Study of Indo-European Accent', and 'Survival of the Fittest' are some of the important contributions contained in these Numbers. A separate fascicule comprising the tables comparing Gupta In-

criptions and Puranic tradition is also supplied along with. All the articles exhibit a very high standard of scholarly exactitude, careful, painstaking investigation, objective evaluation, and a rigorous attempt to arrive at unbiased conclusions. 'Studies in Nagarjunakonda Sculptures' with its profuse illustrative drawings will be of special interest to those who are interested in the social expression of ancient Indian Civilization. Mr. V. M. Apte's article on Castes in the Age of the Rigveda is momentous in as much as he rejects the view current in Indology for a long time that Caste was not formulated in earliest Vedic society and that it is a later growth, and vigorously argues, especially from internal evidences, that 'The Rigvedic Aryans came with the four-fold divisions into India. What happened in the long interval known as the Rigvedic Age was that the Aryans absorbed into their fold large numbers of people (at various stages of culture) with whom they clashed or came into contact. Their fourth class (and to some extent even the third) absorbed the largest proportion of these new accretions and in the process became degraded. The danger of this degradation spreading higher up led gradually to a *hardening of caste distinctions...*'. Thus the orthodox view that the Aryan society in India was never without caste is virtually endorsed, by the latest researches. However, there are evidences, anthropologic and literary, that not only the third and fourth classes but also the first and second, i.e. Brahmana and Kshatriya classes, also, ever since their spread in India (even admitting that they are foreign invaders) have in them an admixture of Munda, Mongolian, Scythian, and Dravidian blood so that it becomes an arrant absurdity today to say that that part of Indian population which is known now under the label of Brahmin or Kshatriya represents undiluted Aryan stock as they emigrated from Central Asia. We recommend this excellent periodical to all libraries and individuals who take special interest in ancient Indian studies. Such a scholarly publication requires high technical perfection in its printing; and in the present instance it is satisfactorily fulfilled.

**Kalyana Kalpataru: The Bhakta Number: PUBLISHED BY THE GITA PRESS, GORAKHPUR, INDIA. BHAKTA NUMBER ALONE RS. 2-8-0. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR THE MONTHLY, INCLUDING THE BHAKTA NUMBER, RS. 4-8-0.**

The inaugural number of the *Kalyana Kalpataru* for 1941 called 'The Bhakta Number' has reached us with the usual punctuality. It is a sumptuous volume of 294 pages of clear print interspersed with twelve attractive tri-coloured illustrations and twenty-four black-and-white pictures, presenting to the vision true or supposed likenesses of the well-known Puranic and historic saints and God-men. Of the total number of 94 long and short articles of varying merit, significance, and value, thirty are devoted to the description and evaluation of Bhakti and its manifold expressions. The succeeding sixty-two writings purport to depict the life of Bhaktas beginning from Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumara, and Sanatana and closing with Swami Sri Narayana Sastri of Palghat. If it is admitted that a general knowledge of the circumstances of the life of the Bhaktas and the disposition of their character, however inadequate it be, alone would suffice to evoke our feelings of devotion and edify us, the questions of biographical details, legend and history, chronology and order of merit, all become impertinent. The Bhakta wants mental company of Bhaktas par excellence. He does not judge. He is not concerned with details that are not significant from his viewpoint. And such details regarding even our historical saints are so meagre at present that it is impossible to construct full-fledged biographies in most of the cases from existing information. Therefore we shall have to be satisfied with what little we could gather from tradition. So what we get regarding several Bhaktas in this Number may be irritatingly inadequate for the historical student; but one who opens the pages of the work with devotion and faith will certainly receive reward for the perusal. At a time like the present one when economic and moral bankruptcy is staring at the face of this once glorious nation of ours and is tending surreptitiously to undermine its inherent strength (which in

truth lies only in its spiritual worth) a renovation of the faith and devotion which once flooded this beautiful land, form an important part of the scheme devised for the regeneration of the country. The laudable attempt of the Gita Press through its various publications to help in this direction has already deserved the appreciation of all who wish well for themselves and their land of birth. It may be mentioned in this connection that the *Sadhananaka* published sometime ago by the same agency as the inaugural number of *Kalyan*, the Hindi monthly, for the year, also presents in a similar manner an attractive array of highly useful articles and charming pictures, forming an excellent compendium for all those who are interested in the practice of religion, if they could dive into that volume without feeling the language barrier.

**Wavelets of Bliss:** BY HANUMAN-PRASAD PODDAR. PUBLISHED BY THE GITA PRESS, GORAKHPUR, INDIA. PRICE As. 2.

This booklet of moral and spiritual exhortations may be read with much benefit by all who desire to lead a better life. Every line of it is a simple and transparent declaration of truths tested by noble minds of all ages. How noble it would have been if a fraction of the resources and energies of men spent through the latest scientific devices of broadcasting were devoted to the promulgation of ennobling thoughts, of which we get a useful sample in this pamphlet! We very much wish that these teachings sink and settle in the minds of our boys and girls before they plunge into the hurry and scurry of the workaday world.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### The Ramakrishna Mission in Fiji.

It is more than one and a half years since Swami Rudrananda came to Fiji. He is yet to take a holiday. He has been working all along for the educational and cultural uplift of the Indian community in general and of the South Indians in particular. It is the sick that need a doctor, and the South Indians, devoid of sufficient encouragement from the Government and lacking in leadership, have found a guide, friend, and philosopher in the Swami.

His activities are manifold, but his main work is connected with the educational activities of the South Indian organization which was responsible for bringing him to Fiji. Carrying on educational activity is no smooth sailing in Fiji. He goes about collecting money, inspects sites for new Schools, corresponds with the Sugar Company for the lease of the site, corresponds with the Government for the recognition of such schools and the award of grants, finds suitable teachers, keeps correct accounts, and makes the two ends meet. Those who have managed one school in one locality can imagine how very difficult it will be to manage more than a dozen schools scattered over distances of tens of

miles and to have a dozen more on 'the anvil.

Besides, the Sangam owns property in the shape of schools, masters' quarters, temples and lands worth thousands of pounds and the task of supervising them all falls upon the Swami. Insurance premiums have to be paid, rents have to be collected, servants have to be paid, buildings are to be repaired, new ones are to be put up, and transactions with the bank have to be carried on. The Swami attends to all these.

Again, he is invited all over the island for Bhajana, Puja, and temple festivals. Last year during the Navaratri Devi Puja he toured the whole island staying for a night in each district performing Homa and Archana. Huge crowds gathered at each place. The birthdays of great and holy men were also celebrated. He performs regular Bhajana on Friday nights at Nadi itself, and on Saturdays he usually goes out to neighbouring or far away villages to conduct Bhajana or Puja. No wonder people are becoming more and more devoted to God!

He also keeps contact with the young men's and ladies' organisations and guides

the activities of the Associations. Last summer he arranged for a summer school for adults and he spent a month with the young men numbering about forty and sent them back to the villages more cultured, educated, and God-minded. He addresses the ladies in every place now and then and guides their activities.

He had two interviews with His Excellency the Governor, and placed before him some of the grievances of the Indian community and has earned his sympathy and support. He also keeps in touch with the General Manager of the Sugar Company and tries to improve the lot of the peasants. His work has brought him into contact with the Director of Education, many of the District officials and Company officers and they all treat him with the respect due to the leader of the South Indian community in Fiji.

In the midst of all this work he maintains his Home of more than forty children and attends to their wants. Every child receives his attention and like a fond mother he sees that they have good food and proper dress. He also sees to their health and happiness. The Home is attached to the central school at Nadi.

Even private individuals get comfort and solace from his counsels when they are in difficulties of any kind. Thus there is no sphere of activity in which his loving personality does not leave its imprint. He is working day and night for the ideals for which his Mission stands, by performing unselfish and loving work for the suffering and the needy.

N. RAMAKRISHNAN.

**The Ramakrishna Mission  
Sarada Vidyalaya  
Madras**

**Report for the Year 1940.**

Sri Sarada Vidyalaya is the largest educational institution for girls run by the Ramakrishna Mission. It consists of a High School for girls, an Elementary School in which young destitute widows are trained for the profession of teaching, two hostels for the students who have to live away from their parents, and a third hostel which is to form the nucleus of a Teachers' Home. Work is carried on in conformity with the ideals set out by the great Swami

Vivekananda and worked out in the field of woman's education by his illustrious disciple Sister Nivedita.

The Vidyalaya is managed by a local Committee of 15 members, 9 of whom are ladies. The Schools and Hostels are now situated in different places. As the Vidyalaya has no permanent building most of the classes are being held in temporary structures. Recently the Committee has planned for the construction of a three-storeyed building at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,66,000, and its foundation-stone was laid on the 10th of May, 1940, by Srīmat Swami Madhavanandaji, the General Secretary to the Math and Mission. A brief account of the type of education imparted through the Vidyalaya and its work during last year follows:

A. *Schools*:—(a) *Accommodation*: The High School was located in temporary structure which were occupied by the Boys' High School till recently. Some sections of the lower forms were located in the premises of the Elementary School for lack of space in the former. The Elementary School continued on the same old site in Ramanathan Street; thereon a few tiled sheds were constructed during the year at a cost of about Rs. 5,000. The Training School, too, with its model section and the Montessori class was accommodated in sheds. (b) *Course of instruction*: The education imparted in the High School was on the lines of the Departmental syllabi. Up to the third Form the medium of instruction was Tamil for Tamil-knowing students and Telugu for Telugu-knowing students. In the High School classes instruction was through the medium of Tamil and English in parallel sections. Provision was made for the teaching of Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, History, Physiology, and Music under the optional group. The study of Sanskrit was compulsory up to the third Form and Sewing and Music were compulsory in lower Forms. In the Elementary School the new syllabus prescribed by the Government was followed and arrangements were made to teach English after the regular school hours, Sanskrit from class 4, and Music suited to young girls. The curriculum for the Training School was that prescribed by the Department for Higher Elementary Grade Training Schools. One unique feature of

this School is that it has a preparatory section into which are admitted young women with little or no previous schooling.

(c) *Library*: The General Library of the High School contained 1,800 volumes in addition to 250 Class Library books. Some important dailies and educational magazines were also received by the Library.

(d) *Strength*: The strength of the High School, the Elementary School, and the Training School were 654, 454, and 256 respectively at the end of the year.

(e) *Physical Training and Games*: The Vidyalaya gave necessary attention to the physique of the students. It had a programme of compulsory games such as Badminton, Tennis, and Throw Ball, for all classes and it provided with regular instruction in physical exercises. (f) *Moral and Religious Instruction*: In addition to Puranic stories, a text book, *Tattvamanjari*, was also taught. Every Friday a Bhajana was conducted and weekly religious meetings of teachers were held. (g) *Progress of the Students*: Of the 32 pupils that appeared for the S. S. L. C. Examination 15 came out successful. Of the 16 senior students who appeared for the Training School Certificate Examination held in March, 1940, 13 passed; and out of 20 ex-students 7 passed. Of the 32 candidates who appeared for the preparatory examination of April, 1940, 27 passed and secured T. S. L. C. for joining the Junior Training class. Nine students received Government Scholarships and two received private scholarships. (h) *Montessori Class*: A Baby class started in April, 1939, in the Elementary School was converted into a Montessori class in June last. The Headmistress of the Training School who has undergone a course of special training under Madame Montessori and a Secondary Grade teacher who is also well-versed in this field were in charge of this class. Altogether there were 45 children—some 3 years old and some 4 years old. In this class the monthly fee per head was Rs. 2. This work was popular and appreciated by Madame Montessori herself.

**B. HOSTELS**:—Three hostels were run during the year, one chiefly for the students of the Training School, another for the pupils of the High School and the Elementary School, and the third mainly for the teachers. The chief aim of the

Teacher's Hostel is to develop a home of consecrated service inspired by the ideals lived and taught by the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi. The dream of the Mission is that this nucleus should in the fullness of time grow into a full-fledged Hindu convent attracting ideal women to the organization and acting as a powerful leaven for the uplift of women.

All the three hostels were under the care of the resident teachers. The inmates had many religious gatherings and occasional visits to holy places.

In addition to the normal activities, the Vidyalaya arranged Literary Society meetings, excursions to places of interest, periodical lectures by men of learning, and music competitions for the benefit of students. The total Receipts and Expenditure of both the Schools and the hostels according to the audited accounts, were Rs. 55,426-15-0 and Rs. 53,753-10-6. The sources of income were public subscriptions and donations, contribution by the Secretariat Party, tuition fees, endowments, etc. The amount in the Reserve Fund at the end of the year was Rs. 64,894-8-11 and this is mostly invested in Government Securities.

From the foregoing account it may be learned that the Vidyalaya shows regular progress in its work. The construction of a permanent building is the immediate need, already taken up, and for which funds have been received from some distinguished persons. For the completion of the undertaking a larger part of the estimated sum is still to be received by way of subscriptions and donations from the generous public which, it should be hoped, will not be delayed long, when it is remembered that 'the ambition of the Management is to see that the Vidyalaya expands and develops into a real nation-building activity of the first magnitude, reaching the heart of the country through the younger generation committed to its charge.'

#### Swamiji's Birthday Anniversary at the Madras Math

The seventy-ninth birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda celebrated at the Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras, on Sunday, January 19, as per usual programme, attracted a large number of admirers and

devotees of the great Swami from morning till evening. The day opened with the *Aratrikam* and solemn music followed by *Nagasvaram* play, chant from Upanishads, *Saptasati* reading, special worship with elaborate rituals, floral decoration of the Altar, fire-sacrifice, varieties of devotional and choral songs, distribution of food consecrated to the Deity among the visitors and about 3,000 poor, religious story-telling, memorial meeting, special light-waving ceremony, and distribution of *prasada*. Tasteful and elaborate decoration of the setting on which the Swami's picture was enthroned formed an attractive feature of the function. Dr. C. R. Reddi, M.A. (Cantab.), Hon. D.Litt., Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University, presided over the meeting and delivered an interesting address couched in suitable language, paying homage to the hallowed memory of the great Swami and brilliant tribute to his noble works. Mr. Reddi specially insisted on a far more widespread and deep understanding of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature ringing with the note of universal benevolence and possessing the virtues needed to dispel the inferiority complex which the Indians have developed in their condition of foreign subjectivity.

#### The Sri Ramakrishna Vedanta College, Bangalore.

Sri Ramakrishna lived from 1836 to 1886. He practised all religions and realized their truth and harmony by personal experience. He taught Swami Vivekananda and others how to attain purity and perfection and live serving all people unselfishly. Swami Vivekananda organized a band of Sannyasins devoted to leading a life of renunciation and practical spirituality which later on came to be known as the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, now having about 500 monastic members on its role. They spread the ideas of Sri Ramakrishna and the harmony of religions and carry on philanthropic work of every kind. At present there are about a hundred and fifty Centres working in various parts of the world. They are real points of contact between people of different denominations and they work for the physical, moral, and spiritual uplift of men and women everywhere. There is a whole literature on modern religion, based on the teach-

ings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

Mysore has been in close touch with the Sri Ramakrishna Movement for the last fifty years. His Highness Chamarajendra Wadayar had seen Swami Vivekananda in 1892 and helped him to go to America and proclaim Hinduism to the Western World. Pages 192-197 of Vol. II of the Swamiji's life contain a vivid account of this period of his contact with Mysore.

The Swamiji wrote a remarkable letter to His Highness in 1894 on 'Our duty to the masses' which is recorded on page 307 of Vol. IV of his works.

We have now two Ashramas in the State, one in Bangalore, started in 1904 and another in Mysore from 1924.

The late Maharaja His Highness Sri Krishnaraja Wadayar took a keen personal interest in the work of the Mission and started a Study Circle six years ago for giving the Monks of the Order a course of training in Eastern and Western Philosophy in the Mysore Ashrama. Three Swamies, so trained, are now working as Missionaries in America and France for several years.

His Highness the late Yuvaraja Sri Narasimharaja Wadayar and Her Highness the Yuvarani have also made public speeches about the Mission in very appreciative terms and generously supported our Institutions, so also our liberal minded and far-seeing statesman, Sir Mirza Ismail, the Dewan Saheb.

An endowment of a lakh of rupees was created into a Trust in August 1938 under the management of the Ramakrishna Math. It brings in about Rs. 5,000 annually. The object of the Trust is to start and maintain institutions for training missionaries for propagating the general principles of all religions as understood by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda without conflict and without sectarianism.

With this endowment, a Vedanta College was started in Bangalore in July 1939, employing two Sannyasin teachers as honorary workers. It trained four students for one year spending Rs. 3,300. It taught them portions of the Scriptures of the Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Christians, with special reference to Hinduism and the harmony of all religions. Three of



these students are under further training to become Brahmacharins and Sannyasins of the Order, in order that they may dedicate themselves for the life-long service of humanity in any part of the world, without seeking any remuneration.

This year there are three Sannyasin teachers and twenty students. The College work is conducted in a building in Malleswaram rented for Rs. 60 a month. The students are taken through the same course of study as in the previous year. They are provided free boarding and lodging in the Ashrama and work according to a fixed programme from 4 a.m. to 10 p.m., under the direct care of the teacher-Sannyasins. The monthly expenditure is about Rs. 500.

A spacious building for the College to accommodate a hundred students is an urgent necessity. It is estimated to cost about Rs. 50,000. The Trust has set apart Rs. 15,000 for this purpose. Generous Donors may build a room at a cost of Rs. 4,000 each and a similar endowment will maintain one student for all time.

We invite the cordial support of all persons for making the Institution a permanent success, in order that it may afford facilities for young men to study the highest principles of morality and goodness and promote the welfare of all classes of people.

SRI VASANANDA

14th Dec. '40  
Bangalore City.

1. The College teaches the Vedanta or principles of Universal Religion and Philosophy as expounded by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

2. The course of study extends to two years. It comprises subjects such as (a) the Bhagavadgita, (b) the Upanishads, (c) the Brahma-Sutras, (d) Comparative

Religion and Philosophy, (e) the Lives and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and the Prophets of the World, and (f) Elementary Sanskrit.

3. The medium of instruction is English, along with the mother tongue where necessary.

4. The student must be between the ages of 18 and 30 and unmarried. He should have passed at least the S.S.L.C. Examination.

5. The teachers are generally qualified monastic members of the Order of Sri Ramakrishna.

6. The teaching is given free to all classes of students, irrespective of caste or creed, provided they are considered fit to undergo the course and profit by the instruction.

7. The study of Religion is not mere book learning. To be effective, it needs high character both in the teacher and the taught. Strict discipline is necessary, in order to understand and assimilate the teaching. The student has to be assisted to practise the precepts of the Vedanta and realize the Divinity of the Atman in him. The system best adapted for the teaching is that of the Gurukul in which the students live under the care and supervision of the teacher-Sannyasins. For this purpose, the College provides free lodging and boarding for about twenty students.

8. The College re-opens on the 10th June. Applications for admission in the prescribed form, available from the Principal, should reach him before that date.

PRINCIPAL.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA,  
BASAVANGUDI,  
BANGALORE CITY.



# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOLUME XXVII



NUMBER 11

MARCH, 1941.

---

## WORK AND CONTEMPLATION

‘No person can in this life reach the point at which he is excused from outward works. What though one lead the contemplative life, one cannot keep from flowing out and mingling in the life of action. Even as a man without a groat may still be generous in the will to give, whereas a man of means in giving nothing cannot be called generous, so no one can have virtues without exercising virtues at the proper time and place. Hence those who lead the contemplative life and do no outward work, are most mistaken and all on the wrong track. What I say is that he who lives the contemplative life may, nay he must, be absolutely free from outward works what time he is in act of contemplation, but afterwards his duty lies in doing outward works; for none can live the contemplative life without a break, and active life bridges the gaps in the life of contemplation.’

MEISTER ECKHART

## THE GOAL OF ORGANIC EVOLUTION

In this discourse given by **Swami Siddheswarananda** at Paris in November, 1939, he argues scientifically that the goal of evolution is the production of *Sthitaprajna*, the highest type of humanity. We are indebted to Sri P. Seshadri Iyer, M.L., of the Travancore University for this lucid translation into English from the original French.—Ed.

THE concept of Dharma has been the subject of our previous talk and we have seen that there are two ways open to us:

1. *Pravritti Marga*. This is the external way. We can fulfil our duties while affording satisfaction to our desires in a legitimate manner. This enables us to exercise over them a progressive control.
2. *Nivritti Marga*. This is the internal way, that of renunciation. It is the mystic path.

Vedanta has this peculiarity, that though it considers that the religious life does not commence except by the immediate practice of renunciation, it also says that we can only gradually reach that state. It is better to follow the general rule if we wish to avoid the shock of reaction, and the rule is the *Pravritti Marga*, the external way. This is why Vedanta recommends this process of gradual purification. It thus differs from Buddhism and Christianity which emphasize renunciation from the very commencement of the spiritual life. In Vedanta renunciation is only the crowning point of the path of evolution. Scientific truths hold good in spiritual matters also. Nature does not march by

leaps and bounds; that is why we have to pursue the investigation of the spiritual life on the external plane fulfilling our daily duties. This investigation is thus a part of religion.

In India it is considered that if the internal force tends towards the comprehension of the Reality, the external life can be religious. If, on the contrary, the individual is not disciplined by fulfilling the social obligations towards the nation or the family to which he belongs, spiritual life is closed to him.

Again, if the spirit of renunciation is the result of reverses or failures in our life and we thus have a certain bitterness towards life, our renunciation will be only formal. It will not last; our ego will remain dominant. It will be ever filled with desires. That renunciation is then the result of an internal deception and it is not a truly spiritual attitude.

The proper attitude will be the outcome of an introspection. We may recall the example of the Musk-deer. We try in the beginning to localise our desires in the external. Experience reveals to us that the perfume of the musk is in us. St. Augustine has said on this subject: 'I have searched for you in the public places of the world city. I have missed you. I was searching outside, when you were really in me.'

In fact, our search is always going on without any intermission. But it is habitually directed towards the external; the *elan* is in our own organism and, from this standpoint, the

modern conception of evolution is very similar to that of Vedanta. The great savants, Lamarck and Darwin, who thought about this problem have determined the causes of evolution to be (1) the influence of surroundings and (2) the struggle for existence; that is to say, the friction between the individual and his surroundings brings about changes in the organism. The surroundings are aggressive. They menace the life of the individual and he reacts to protect himself. It is thus that we can follow the course of evolution from the great anthropoid up to man. Now we find that when we consider at one sweep the entire process of evolution, the desire of perpetuating something is inherent therein. The same tendency manifests itself in the protoplasm, in the jellyfish, as well as in all the series of superior beings. Each organism wishes to live and perpetuate its being. No organism is willing to die.

We distinguish in every living being: (1) the instinctive desire to perpetuate itself and (2) the capacity to protect itself and oppose the menaces and attempts to destroy it. If this capacity does not exist, if new means of protection are not found out, the individual is crushed. These two are the forces of instinct.

In man, this biological force is equally manifest. You know that there is the great principle: 'Ontogeny reproduces phylogeny'; during gestation, the foetus reproduces the different phases of evolution. It is thus that, at birth, we get the instinctive faculties. Our animal heritage produces in us the desire to live, to perpetuate ourselves and to fight against the hardship of death.

On the sub-human plane, the forces of instinct alone are manifest. On

the human plane intelligence appears. The ego-consciousness begins to manifest and man repeats in the mental plane the process of nature. He takes up again a sub-human position. That is why the relations between nations are regulated by primitive laws, born of instinct. The life of the individual is not taken into account except in so far as he contributes to the survival of the community of which he is a member.

We have seen that the man who proceeds to an internal analysis arrives, after innumerable attempts and errors, at the following conclusion. The perfume is within himself. He understands that the *clan*, which tended to make him lead an external life, was in reality due to the force which is ever within him. The great sages have furnished us also with the means to verify the truth that the centre of immortality is within us. When that knowledge dawns on us, we get back our divine heritage—the Permanent Existence which is known as 'Sat' in India.

We build our personality on this invisible basis; behind our ephemeral personality, we find that Reality which cannot be defined as an object of knowledge, and which is not affected by time, space, and causation.

The great sages got this experience by the mystic way. Thanks to them, we are able to know that the same potentiality is in us. Human nature is based on this Reality. This is the true basis of 'Sat'.

When we attain this spiritual knowledge, we possess what is called in India 'Chit' (Absolute Knowledge). This knowledge is indispensable if we wish to avoid once for all fear and death. To acquire this knowledge we have to exercise a rigorous control

over our internal life; thus only can we concentrate our attention on the centre, the 'Sat'.

It is also this internal experience which reveals to us 'Ananda' the supreme Joy, the permanent happiness which lives above the dual throng.

To sum up, real nature is called in Sanskrit *Sacchidananda* Existence, knowledge, and Bliss absolute.

We see thus that, after all, personality does not really exist. In the field of experience (Kshetra), in manifestation, we none the less consider that it is true and the goal of our existence is to protect that personality from all contingent attacks. When we attain superior knowledge, we find another personality, a permanent personality, a cosmic personality.

Every time that we forget this reality, every time that we lose sight of this cosmic personality, we feel 'isolated'. Then we feel fear. But when we establish our relation with the whole world, fear departs from us. Fear manifests itself as a biological heritage, as a means of defence. It assures to us the protection of our interests.

When moral consciousness awakens, we get hold of the relation which unites us to Totality. We feel that permanent force in us. We understand that that force is beyond the reach of death. It is in the subconscious that we have conserved fear, and we have to fight to destroy this fear in us. If we analyse the cause of fear we find that we have fear, because we feel isolated; when there is separation, there is fear also. In the child, fear manifests itself at night, the parents being away from the child. It feels itself alone and hence is afraid. The sage, who is establish-

ed in Totality, knows not fear. Even in the presence of death, fear does not affect him.

Fear is very rarely collective and that is why the isolated individual is susceptible to fear. The group employs different means to conquer the animal-fear, even though the methods which it employs are not spiritual and assure only a temporary victory. A group, which remains insensible to fear before the worst dangers, can very well be composed of individuals whose spiritual level is not at all high. The conquest of fear by spiritual knowledge can only be individual. It is the result of a moral progress.

Schopenhauer says that the Universe contains two marvels: the stars above and the moral world below. The moral world cannot exist except in Totality and the being who dwells in Totality will have no sentiment of fear. The true hero is he who has conquered his own fear. His conduct is not guided by an external excitement; moral force has dawned on him and that directs all his acts. He knows that he is in relation with the entire humanity, with the whole world.

For him, who is unmoved by fear because he belongs to a group or community, victory is not obtained except by a gregarious force. This has no spiritual value, unless it comes from an elevated centre by the example of a group of persons who have realized their identity with the cosmos. The gregarious force, on the other hand, emanates mostly from an inferior centre, which is allied to instinct. In a community, the individual has only the spirit of a hive which Maeterlinck has so remarkably analysed. If a bee is killed, the

remaining bees of the hive become very furious. All animal life is directed by an unerring instinct.

We can admit that gregarious existence develops itself in some manner in Totality; but it is only a relative Totality. The individual has no distinct or personal life. He is taken in the group and all his existence is linked to that of the members of the groups. It is however the instinct which directs and not intelligence; the whole emphasis is placed on the group and the individual has no self-consciousness.

The individual does not separate himself from the mass except when he knows himself as such. He possesses the faculty of committing errors, which the bee of the hive and the ant in the ant-group do not possess.

New mental forces appear in man. He can foresee and use his critical sense. He then feels that he has the right to commit errors. New conflicts begin and he loses his peace of mind. He begins to seek that which is fundamental. He seeks the truth, because he wants, at any cost, to perpetuate something in himself.

It would be well to observe the turn of life, according to the scientific method. If we consider the living beings below man, we can see that the turn tends towards the preservation of the individual. It is directed by instinct and knows no error. When we come to man, intelligence begins to manifest and conflict and error begin to play. Man has thus two privileges: (1) to fall in error and (2) to be discontented and restless. We must become 'jivanmuktas' to preserve a balanced mind at all times. In all the inferior stages, there is an eternal conflict; that is the indispensable condition of a new ascent. Ego

does not manifest in man except to enable him to rise to a higher plane. If we wish to picture the line of life geometrically, we can trace a horizontal line to represent the activity which plays on the sub-human plane. In man, the conscience of the individual differentiates itself from that of the group. The line of life becomes vertical.

Until then, the individual believes that life in common conduces to his own interest as well as to that of the members of the group. But man knows that he cannot appease all his desires nor satisfy his thirst for joy. He marches in quest of the truth; by internal analysis he goes to the basis of his nature and he finds that all the force of the universe is in him; before reaching that conclusion, he has the legitimate right to make unfortunate attempts, to pursue his personal experiences; in short, he has the right to deceive himself. When, at last, he finds that truth is within him, he seeks to realize a new type of humanity. Nature thus attempts to produce a new specimen, a new prototype. If humanity tends unceasingly towards a uniform standardized type, it will be really the death of humanity.

So long as man does not realize this, he will be restless; he will unconsciously desire to approach that which is Permanent. This he cannot attain until after a long series of internal experiences which will take him to true knowledge and make him taste of the supreme felicity. When the goal is attained, the line of life becomes again horizontal.

It is thus that the vital *elan* works through all humanity. The great sages, who have realized, have reached the end of this *elan*. The number

of these sages is limited. We have only one Buddha, one Christ, and one Ramakrishna. But their example persists in human nature; Nature thus preserves the faculty of reproducing one of those superior types when the necessity is felt.

For example, we have today in India one superhuman type, Gandhi. The conquest of external nature leads to the identification with the total life. This is the state which Sri Ramakrishna attained. It is this state which Aurobindo Ghose and Ramana Maharshi have reached. I have myself visited this last sage many a time. Mr. Brunton has spoken about him in his *Secret India*. I have remained with the Maharshi for many weeks; an extraordinary force emanates from him. He really belongs to a new type of humanity. I shall mention here an anecdote full of significance.

The Maharshi lives in a small village, or rather some miles from that village. One day burglars broke in. They supposed that much wealth was concealed in the hut where this small group lived. One of the burglars rudely beat the Maharshi. A Mohammedan disciple, who was very robust, wished to retaliate. The Master forbade. 'It is not by blows that we can change the nature of this man,' said he. This attitude made a great impression on the burglars. The Maharshi had thus unconsciously repeated the words of Jesus.

Gandhi was also assailed by a Mohammedan when he was in prison in South Africa. With a blow, he knocked down one tooth of Gandhi and Gandhi fainted. When he returned to consciousness, he refused to

lodge a complaint against his aggressor, who later on became his disciple.

Sri Ramakrishna also had a similar experience. He was living then in the palace of a wealthy zamindar. One employee asked him one day to teach him a magic Mantra, which would be of service to him. Ramakrishna replied that he had no such magic Mantra. The man beat him and Ramakrishna lost consciousness. He did not mention this to anyone. Some time later a theft was committed within the palace and the aggressor of Ramakrishna was dismissed. Many months later, Sri Ramakrishna incidentally narrated this happening to the Zamindar. 'Why did you not tell me then?' asked the Zamindar. Ramakrishna replied: 'It was my mistake. The man believed that I had the power to prevent him from doing wrong. If I had possessed the power, he would not have committed the theft.'

From these examples, we get this truth: We should not return hatred for hatred. This is the new type of humanity created by Nature. This is clearly seen when we think of the catastrophe which has overtaken all Europe. The power to reproduce this superior type remains latent in humanity.

In the state, which is established after liberation, it is sometimes said that the ego dies. This is not the exact term which should be employed. The death of the ego is not really a suicide. Even after liberation, personality subsists. Look at the example of the Maharshi. Jesus, after having realized God, gave up his life for a great cause. Buddha, who had attained Nirvana, was destined to live for more than twenty-four years. Many great personalities have lived

for a long time after their liberation so that they may show the efficacy of the spiritual life. In the man who has realized, the movement of life assumes the horizontal line.

To sum up, we may say about the line of life that (1) when it is gregarious, it is horizontal, (2) when it is under the pressure of the ego, it becomes vertical. We are helping then to the birth of the individual, the personality which is opposed to the surroundings.

When moral consciousness awakens and a relation between the individual and the Totality is established, it becomes horizontal. The death of the ego, at the final step, is nothing but the identification with the Total Life.

He who has arrived at this reality, can show the example. He is the veritable hero who, according to the words of Saint Teresa of Avilla, carries away along with him a company of people.

Some philosophers have frequently raised objections against the acceptance of this ideal and the use which has been made of it for spiritual help and consolation. They desire in short to free the individual from the obligation which is imposed on him to conform to an ideal standard. If man is forced to be limited to a commonly accepted ideal, he will have no means of escape. He will be prisoner for life and he has a legitimate right to vindicate, i.e., the right of committing errors. If the way is barred for him on all sides, the individual will have no proper worth of his own. The sole issue is the education of the individual. It is thus that we can realize the truth and reach the state of a liberated being.

We think that when man finds himself surrounded by instinctive inferior forces, brutality, ferocity, hatred, etc., he can find the means to liberate himself if he has constantly before his eyes a great ideal. Take then the instance you prefer, whether it be that of Jesus, or of Buddha, or any other great sage. The ideal is no more a person. It helps us to free ourselves, from yielding to the influence of surroundings. The chosen ideal leads us to the supreme goal; but to reach this end it is necessary that we should feel an intense desire to rise above the inferior life. If you think constantly with fervour, 'Buddha has realized, Jesus has realized, etc.', it will in course of time produce a movement, which will enable you to reproduce the superior type of humanity you have taken as your model.

Consider, for example, the flying fish. The desire to escape from the dangers of the surroundings and to fly from the attack of the carnivorous fish, which pursues it, gives it the wings that enable it to fly. It is thus able to sustain itself against aggressions and menaces. If we have the same intense desire, we shall find that we have also the same power. It is then that a great courage develops in us.

Now realization is accessible to all and we have to work for this end. To lead a good life, it is indispensable that we rest constantly in a conscious state. Otherwise it is not possible to have even the least spiritual progress.

The ideal thus understood is not a prison. On the contrary it offers the only means to reach to the height of knowledge. When that conviction is well established in us, the smallest act of our everyday life will have a



supreme value. Each of our acts is done by us with a view to reach the goal. We find the same idea in the *Aparokshanubhuti* of Sankara : 'Whatever be the thing on which man meditates, with perseverance and fervour, he himself soon becomes that thing.' The insect in the presence of a wasp is an illustration. The great Psycho-analyst Freud and his successors who have taken up the ideas of Freud under a different aspect—Adler and Jung—have deeply studied that part in us which is called the subconscious. From the psychological standpoint they have proved that all individuals are linked together by the subconscious.

Now the great sages humanity has known have produced a new type of men and the power of reproducing anyone of these types is in us. If a superior man has realized the spiritual worth, that same value will be equally found in us. This archetype lives in our own being because we feel in us the hope of realization. Thus all the great masters of the past, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, etc., slumber in us and earnest practical meditation can enable us to bring out this internal power. If we seek outside us, our search will be vain. We will find it nowhere except in the depths of our hearts.

Men spend most of their time in giving momentary satisfaction to the forces of instinct. They thus pursue interested ends and forget the existence of cosmic forces. They lose sight of the Totality which should be the only object of their search. This is due to ignorance and it is to those under its influence that the words of Jesus can be applied: 'Forgive them for they know not what they do.'

We thus reach the conception of sin which Christianity has employed sometimes illegitimately. According to Vedanta, as long as man remains in an inferior stage of consciousness without the perception of the ideal, he does not sin; because if it should amount to a sin, he must have knowledge of it. That knowledge lacking, he cannot sin. We cannot sin unless we knowingly commit an act contrary to our ideal.

We see then that we have in us two heritages: (1) the biological and (2) the divine. The example to be followed is within us and the conflict between these two opposing elements is ever going on. If there is no knowledge, then it is by ignorance that we do evil and ignorance is no sin. To sin in the proper sense of the word, there should be three factors: (1) the consciousness of the ideal, (2) the knowledge that the act is a sin, and (3) the consent in spite of all these to the reprehensible act.

Error is a necessary stage. It is the point we have perforce to pass to reach a superior stage. The force which great spiritual beings have manifested aids all society. It enables every individual in society to raise himself higher. Mysticism thus understood is not a mere question of personal satisfaction. It has a social role. Its action extends to all humanity, as it is thus that each individual can help in the search towards knowledge. The presence of such persons in any age is the sign that all is not lost and that we should not despair of the future. Without them, humanity will ever remain in the state of brutality and animality.

Spiritual life, then, enables each individual, whether he accepts or does not accept theistic conceptions, to

produce superior types of humanity. If dogmas, rites, and conventions do not enable us to raise ourselves in the ladder of life, they have no value. It is in these circumstances that dogmas do really constitute for us a prison.

This is in fact a great discovery of the Orient. We can lead a spiritual life without accepting theistic ideas whatsoever, though according to the Semitic conceptions, when there is no idea of God, spiritual life is impossible. In India the great majority accept the idea of God ; but there is also the way of Jnana and the way of Buddhism, which are based on objective research and experimentation.

If, in the course of his researches, a man realizes a new type like Buddha or the Maharshi, many others can conform to that. Has not Jesus said 'all that I do can be done by you also' ? Now the Maharshi declares that in spite of a very high degree of consciousness, which he has attained, he has had no personal experience of God. When anyone puts him a question, he generally asks : Who has put this question? All other questions come only later. The basis of the Maharshi's teaching is the study of oneself. Each can, according to his own way, turn towards a spiritual life, and spiritual life is a question strictly personal. Dogmas, rites, beliefs, and theology are but the diverse means which enable us to tangibly feel the spiritual life. They have no value except that of prompting the individual to begin the great pilgrimage; but he who has had realization in this very life is verily God Himself. Vedanta says that the gods themselves offer worship to him who has realized Brahman, the Absolute. This is, according to the Hindu con-

ception, the source and the end of things. You can then, according to your own inclinations, choose the personal or impersonal aspect ; the essential thing for us is to realize.

According to Vedanta, the Atman-Brahman is the substance of all that exists. It does not need a Personal God ; yet for the vast majority of people Atman-Brahman represents a Personal God.

The conceptions of God are many. Someone in the West asked me once: Have you got any sacraments in India ? 'Yes, we have,' was my reply. 'Then you must abandon all your ideas, because there is something which is much higher than Hinduism, the sacrament. How can we live without sacrament ?' was his remark. I replied: 'You commune with bread and wine. I admit that you can find there the presence of Jesus. Bread and wine can be the support of the doctrine of transubstantiation. In India, we have the sacred water of the Ganges and the rice offered to the gods (Prasadam). I accept your idea. You can also accept mine. God can be found in bread and wine as well as in the water of the Ganges.'

Mohamed has often been a little sectarian in his outlook. But if you read the Koran, you can see that he has said that there are no religious communities where God has not revealed Himself.

Whatever be the conceptions of God, theology and philosophy search after the unity ; modern science has the same attitude. It is really a universal tendency of man to seek for unity in the multiplicity of facts. This is the only way by which we can find an explanation. Despite the difference which all these conceptions present, there is a common ground.

The *Bhagavadgita* proposes a universal conception of God. It speaks of God with form, as well as without form. All these conceptions we have seen have only this value that they lead us to a new type of superior humanity; and the end of the second chapter of the *Gita* gives an exemplary model. It is said of Jesus *ecce homo*, and in the presence of a Maharshi or a Gandhi, we can repeat 'there is the man'.

We are only candidates to humanity. The superior type of humanity consists in identifying ourselves with the world, the Universe all entire. This ideal is useful to us. It encourages us so that we may gradually rise above all selfish interests. An ideal of this nature is no prison.

An ideal has no value unless it enables individuals to realize their unity with the Total Life.

## MYSTICISM AND UNITY IN NATURE

**Dr. Adhar Chandra Das, M.A., Ph.D.,** lecturer in Philosophy, Calcutta University, canvasses in this paper some of the important approaches to unity in Nature, and concludes that the mystic Unity is unrivalled in as much as we possess in it the supreme unity in our being—a unity which is a psychological experience and a state of beatitude at the same time. The paper is based on a lecture given at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, on December 14, 1940.—Ed.

MUCH has, of recent years, been written on mysticism. But the word 'mysticism' is not always used precisely in the same sense. Some are of the opinion that mystic phenomena are those which are really subnormal; they seem to think that mystics are maddest cranks, and that a little craziness together with a pair of tongs, a pinch of ashes, matted hair, a shaggy beard, is enough to make one a good mystic. Some others, on the contrary, restrict the use of the term 'mystic' to those experiences, which are super-normal and far beyond the reach of

reason. There are doubtless many other senses in which the words 'mystic' and 'mysticism' are nowadays employed. It serves no purpose here to go into them all. Suffice it to say that the import of a word is in many cases a matter of individual choice and caprice. Nevertheless, a word as a means of communication must convey a fixed meaning in the proper context. Though the words 'mystic' and 'mysticism' are used in a somewhat loose sense in common parlance, yet there is a fixity about their meanings in their use in literature. 'Mysticism' in its proper acceptation indicates that kind of experience, or rather experience of the supreme Reality, which, though inaccessible to reason, is attainable through spiritual deepening of our conscious life. It is exactly from this point of view that I consider the question whether there can be really two kinds of mysticism.

Some contend that there are two kinds of mysticism according as there are two distinct methods of approach and two distinct contents of mystic

experience.<sup>1</sup> There may be, in fact there are, many methods employed in the sphere of mystic life. But mere difference in methods employed cannot determine any kinds of the latter; for the methods, though different, are calculated to lead to the same goal, namely, mystic realization of the Supreme. It is none the less maintained that there are two fundamental ways of approach—the inward way and the way of Unity, and that it is upon this difference of the two ways that the distinction between the two kinds of mysticism is to be based. I should then consider the matter in some detail.

What is the way of Unity? The Unity in question is admittedly the unity in the differences of things and beings and is said to be a matter of intuition. One may now say at once that, if intuition is there as the mode of knowledge, the way of approach indicated must be inward. But it is pointed out that, though intuition itself as an organ of knowledge is inward, yet the content thereof is something that relates to the multiplicity of things that go to make up Nature. It is true that the intuitionist's attitude to the world is far removed from that of the ordinary man, who looks upon Nature as a mere aggregate of an indefinite number of things and beings. But it will not do to forget that intuition is no monopoly of the mystics; intuition as a form of immediate apprehension is found to function also in different other ways.

The scientist in his attitude to Nature transcends the point of view of common sense. He proceeds with the innate conviction that Nature as

a whole is instinct with law. And this initial conviction becomes reasoned faith through the generalizations that he gradually makes in his investigations. It is not that the scientists have between them completed analysis of the full wealth of Nature. In comparison with what yet lies unexplored, the achievements in the domain of science seem to be very fragmentary. Nevertheless the results that have hitherto been obtained go to show that the conviction the scientist starts with is amply confirmed.

But I may be told that modern physics has revolutionized the whole mechanistic scheme of Nature by introducing the notion of indeterminism in the operations of electrons and protons, especially in certain contexts,—the operations which, as it is contended, cannot be brought within the framework of what is strictly to be called a law. The point raised really involves a problem of the first magnitude. But I cannot enter upon any discussion of it here; for that will take me far away from my theme. This much, however, I can say that the experiments that are put into evidence of the theory of indeterminism in Nature serve only to show that Nature there keeps away the secret of her functioning from the view of the scientists, however keen that be. When physicists construct their theory of indeterminism on the ground of some specific experiments in respect of certain phenomena, wherein they fail to detect the cause-effect relation, they, beyond doubt, commit a fallacy; in other words, since they fail to find any causal relation in and between some phenomena, they conclude that there is no causal relation there, and;

<sup>1</sup> R. Otto: *Mysticism East and West*.

for the matter of that, no causal nexus in Nature. There is nothing to justify us in ascribing omniscience to the physicists; for they are still in 'the valley of false glimmer'. As Sir James Jeans puts it, 'We may say it appears probable that it will rain tomorrow, while the meteorological expert, knowing that a deep depression is coming eastward from the Atlantic, can say with confidence that it will be wet. . . . In the same way the appeal of the new physics to probabilities may merely cloak its ignorance of the true mechanism of nature.'<sup>2</sup> All this is, however, another matter. What we have to consider here is whether the aforesaid conviction of the scientist is a mystic intuition. Truly the scientist in the beginning envisages Nature as a systematic whole; uniformity of Nature is the content of his intuitive conviction. We may say that the intuition the scientist is credited with is mystic if we choose to take the word 'mystic' to cover all that which defies any rational explanation. There is, however, the fact that the content of the scientist's intuition is not any fundamental unity manifesting itself in the multiplicity of things. So the intuition with which the scientist proceeds in his investigation represents no mysticism.

We have to face a problem as soon as we rise to the philosophic point of view. If we go back in mind to the beginning of European philosophy, we find a thinker who penetrates through the veil of things and beings to an underlying unity. Thus he declares water to be the ultimate reality of which everything else in the universe is a mode. The seeds of

things and beings contain, as he argues, moisture. Water is therefore an element common to them all, and this common element he raises to the statue of the ultimate unity which transforms itself into the multitudinous things and beings of the world. There are, to my mind, two distinct stages in the development of the philosophy of the first Greek philosopher. He first intuits that there is a fundamental unity behind the differences of things. Then he seeks to make articulate this felt unity by identifying it with an element that is found to be common to certain things. Here we should not confuse between two things—the initial sense of unity and its characterization as water. We must also take note of the fact that, whatever the unity is in its essential nature, it cannot be a common element observable in some things; for a common element affords ground only for similarity between the things in question and does in no way make any essential unity of which the phenomena of Nature are manifestations. And all this goes to show that, though the unity, of which the philosopher mentioned above has a sense, may be said to hold within it the multiplicity of things and beings, yet it is all vague and indeterminate. The determination that the unity receives from the philosopher himself destroys the unity altogether inasmuch as it soon lapses into an element amongst other elements that are there in Nature.

Strictly, a bare sense of unity is not enough. Intuition of unity is all important; still more important is its proper articulation. Feelings about such a unity are no exclusive possession of a civilized mind. They are found more or less at the differ-

<sup>2</sup> *The Mysterious Universe*, p. 24.

ent levels of culture higher and lower. Some such feelings we discern in the sense of the *numinous* and in the varying forms of primitive religion. Behind fetish worship there is a feeling that points to a vague supernatural presence. And if primitive men, unlike us moderns, pay their worshipful attention to stocks and stones, it is only because the latter in an inexpressible way speak to them the truth; they appeal to the imagination of the primitives through a subtle suggestion of the Supreme which they feel dimly in the depths of their being. The mind of the savage like that of the philosopher is presumably seized with a sense of a supernatural presence. And the only difference that we find between them is this, that, whereas the former loses the sense, it has, of unity in Nature in the gross symbolism to which it is driven partly under the urge of practical needs and partly by intellectual incapacity, the latter in virtue of its development through culture retains to a degree its theoretical interest and tries to determine the felt unity through concept. The result is, however, much the same; the initial felt unity remains indeterminate in spite of the attempts made to make it articulate.

The matter will be clearer if we take a typical philosophical monism into consideration. Let me pick out a point or two from the philosophy of Spinoza, whose speculation starts with intuition of a unity which defies all determination. An analysis of his theory of knowledge will show that there are, according to him, some steps which can be arranged in a hierarchy. Thus sensuous knowledge is the lowest stage, in which the objects of knowledge are believed to be

particulars without any intimate relations whatsoever. The next higher stage is that of scientific knowledge wherein systematic relations between things are discerned and formulated in the shape of general ideas and principles. And the third level of knowledge is that of philosophy at which the system of Nature reveals a fundamental unity lying in the heart of things. This revelation is intellectual intuition, which supervenes on the thinking consideration of things.

But we shall do well to note that mere intuition of a vague unity behind the multiplicity of things and beings is not enough; for, if it is not merely subjective, it must be communicable and made intelligible through concepts. That the supreme nature of the unity is not clearly apprehended by Spinoza, though there is no denying that he has a clear sense of it, is shown by the conceptions he forms of it—the conceptions that have within them a crop of contradictions. Thus the Unity is conceived as Substance. But it is not shown with sufficient clarity how the supreme Substance ramifies itself into the things and beings of Nature. And, what is more, Spinoza squeezes into the essence of the Unity two attributes among countless others, namely, thought and matter that can by no means be placed on the same footing. If there is anything material, it is not there for itself, that is, as an end in itself, but is there always for thought as its content, and as an environment of all that is conscious. It is not only that anything physical and finite does not contain within itself its explanation, but also that every existence, whatever it is, is revealed through thought which is

to be taken as self-conscious spiritual being. Thought in this large sense is then obviously the prius of the whole realm of existence. Such being the case, Spinoza's conception of the Unity that he intuites as Substance containing as it does thought and matter amongst its infinite attributes, is but a clumsy way of explaining things. His Substance is just like a house where we store up things that we may get them when we shall want them back. It is then clear that the content of the original intuition still remains indeterminate. We can now say that in the attempt to make it articulate Spinoza fumbles and in the end fails in his purpose altogether. Is this then the fate of all philosophy ?

The question brings us to a vast problem which I cannot try to settle here. The least that I can say regarding the theme is that, every philosophy does not or need not necessarily end in some clumsy conclusions. A neat course can be attempted on the basis of the system of Nature as the starting-point. To begin with, we can do well to consider what a system is like. To be brief, a system is a whole of mutually determined parts ; such that a part is a part in the whole, occupying its position and performing its function. And the whole is nothing but the inter-dependent parts together. Now then, if the system of Nature is just a whole of reciprocally determined things and beings, we do not find the ultimate principle of explanation of all existence either in this system or in any of its parts ; for every part presupposes all the others, and again the whole is exactly that which they together, that is in their mutual relationships, make up. There is obvi-

ously need for pushing beyond to penetrate to a principle which determines itself in the system of Nature without being itself determined by anything else ; otherwise an infinite regress would soon be under way. So the principle that would explain Nature with her wealth of details must be self-determined, or which is the same thing, absolutely free. Of this freedom we find an analogue, though a remote one, in finite spirits. On a reflective analysis of our inner being the concept or the category of self-conscious and self-determined being, i.e. spirit, wells up in our consciousness. But the difficulty is that, though the conception of spirit has for its basis experience of our inner being, yet the conception cannot get its fulfilment in the actual existence that is there. Unlike stocks and stones and even the lower animals, finite spirits enjoy a measure of self-determination. It is none the less true that they are to a great extent determined by their environments inclusive of their bodies. We thus come to the pretty pass that, though we have the conception of spirit, yet we cannot fill it from actual existence. There is then clearly need for a change-over. Intellectual analysis and comprehension can carry us far towards the supreme Being. But that way we reach in the end a point where we must halt to betake ourselves to an altogether fresh means and method to reach the destination.

Now it is to be seen that the way of the unity is not one. There are in fact many approaches to it, ranging from the vague feeling of unity of Nature to the philosopher's category of spirit infinite. But in none of them, as I have tried to show, the supreme Unity is possessed in our be-

ing. Mysticism being precisely that kind of life or experience, wherein one realizes oneness with the One, cannot be a matter of mere feeling, a concept or a category. The content of a feeling is sub-rational, while that of a concept is rational. The content of mystic experience, however, transcends both, and is really supra-rational. How is then this experience to be gained ?

It is perfectly clear that we, ordinary men, have not yet gained such an experience. There is in us, in short, a lack of the supreme knowledge, which is ignorance. So to attain to the ultimate spiritual Unity of the universe is just to remove this ignorance on our part. But we cannot dispel it all at once. We have to progress towards the goal only gradually, and to this end we have to gather up our being. We have to pass through a strenuous discipline under the guidance of a master soul; for those who can lead us on into the supreme experience are verily the persons who have themselves traversed and known the Path. अस्तीति मुक्तोऽन्यत्र कथं तदुपलभ्यते ।<sup>3</sup> The whole thing then hinges upon us—finite spirits. We can attain mystic experience only by way of the unfoldment of our real being, which is infinite and eternal. That we shall attain only through the transformation of our empirical, finite

conscious being and realize our being as none other but the supreme source of everything in the worlds. That state of beatitude is indicated in the Upanishadic saying: यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवामृद्विजानतः ।<sup>4</sup> How can therefore be two kinds of mysticism—the way of Unity and the inward way ? In our consideration of the above few points what is borne in upon us is that realization of the ultimate Unity in the universe will be the climax of the process of transformation of our finite consciousness through Sadhana. There is therefore only one way to the mystic goal—the inward way, deepening of our conscious being. But the inward way does not in the least indicate that the spiritual aspirant takes sanctuary in his innermost being, which is not trammelled by anything sensuous. In a way it is true that he abstracts, he has to, from the external objects, which do not so much as reveal a unity at the back of them all. The approach to the Ultimate through the psychological is inevitable inasmuch as the supreme realization on our part will be a state of supreme experience. And the aspirant really finds himself on the Path the moment he takes upon himself the arduous task of transmuting his tangled empirical being through Tapas or Yoga.

ADHAR CHANDRA DAS

<sup>3</sup> *Katha Upanishad*, II: iii. 12.

<sup>4</sup> *Isha Upanishad*, 7.



## A LAYMAN'S DHARMA

Volumes full of precepts are not required to make one noble. The simple rules put in a small stanza like the one quoted and expounded by Mr. G. A. Chandavarkar, M.A., at once show how universally recognized, yet how rarely practised to perfection, these great virtues are.—Ed.

THE scope of Dharma is so wide and comprehensive that it includes religion, duty, philosophy, ethics, and metaphysics. The force that binds all, the desire that goads all to discharge their duties, the will to acquire knowledge and wisdom, the consciousness of the moral obligations to the society and the satisfaction of the Soul's hunger to reach the 'Goal Final' are all included in that one remarkable word Dharma. A question therefore naturally arises whether all these ideals can be reached, or concepts realized, by a layman in this one short life. Each factor that goes to make up Dharma is by itself so difficult that an ordinary individual finds it practically impossible to grasp them all fully. Let us just think of one aspect. Themes like Vedanta, Para-Vidya, Aparavidya, and works like Shad-darshans, Upanishads, Vedas, Smritis, and Puranas seem to be so bewildering that a layman is bound to feel that the task is supremely difficult. What hope then can there be for an individual lacking the capacity and the opportunity to master them all; that, too, at a time when the struggles and scrambles even to keep one's body and soul together are so great? Has an illiterate or less gifted soul no hope of salvation? Is its fate sealed for

all times? Our scriptures give an unequivocal answer to this question. One sublime verse gives the clue to the solution of the problem:

कस्य चित् किमपि नो हरणीयम्  
मर्मवाक्यमपि नोच्चरणीयम्  
श्रीपतेः पदयुगं स्मरणीयम्  
लीलया भवजलं तरणीयम् ॥

The above stanza may be translated thus:

'Commit no theft. Do not deprive others of anything.

Do not wound the feelings of others in any way.

Always think of God. Contemplate on His goodness and greatness.

If you follow these three simple rules, you can very easily and playfully cross this ocean of life.'

We consider that no easier, simpler, and better postulate of a layman's Dharma can be formulated. The first step given here is that of *Asteya*—non-theft. Let him not covet anything belonging to others. Let him not deprive others of anything belonging to them. If he has the power or chance to gratify his selfish desires let him not put others to loss of any kind. Secondly, let him practise *non-violence*. Let him not wound the feelings of others by his word, deed, or thought. Thirdly, let him always think of God. Let him have faith in His goodness and kindness. These three simple rules will enable a layman to obtain *Mukti*. The principles enunciated above are simple yet sublime. No scholarship, no great learning, and no great penance are needed to practise these preachings. Poverty

need not be a bar to practise them. 'Respect the rights and privileges of others, revere the sentiments of others, and love God with all your heart.' We believe that any one can and should possess these virtues and therefore a layman's *Dharma* can be simple and at the same time all-comprehensive and effective.

A similar ideal is set forth in the *Bhagavadgita* also. Says Sri Krishna 'I am not to be attained either by a profound study of the Vedas, or by the performance of a severe type of penance, or by great knowledge, or by means of Yajnas or Yagas—ceremonial sacrifices. I am to be won by simple love.' Says the *Isavasya Upanishad* also: 'Covet not anything belonging to others.' A prompt and a significant reply given by Sri Krishna to Narada is also noteworthy. 'Oh, Narada, I do not live in Vainunkuntha. I do not live in the hearts of Yogis. I stay where my devotees sing my glory sincerely.'

Such simple preachings were resorted to by the saints of the medieval ages in India, and the masses were roused. They worked out mighty revolutions in the ideas of common men and women. The *Bhagavat Dharma*, as was preached and revived by Kabir, Nanak, Tukaram, and Ramadas, was potent enough to move the masses. They preached that the Kingdom of God could be shared by the humblest, the lowest, and the poorest. Even to this day in centres like Pandharpur that were at one time the rendezvous of Bhaktas ring with the echoes of emotion, piety,

and *prema*. The nine-fold path of Bhakti as preached by the saints is equally simple and open to all irrespective of caste, colour, or creed. A layman then need not despair. He need not labour under a delusion that Hinduism is only the monopoly of Pandits, scholars, and the opulent. The peculiarity of the Hindu religion is that it can appeal to all, be he a scholar or an ordinary individual. Neither the vastness of the Scriptures in Sanskrit nor the performances of numerous ceremonials can be a hindrance in the way of a *Sadhaka* or an earnest seeker after a life that is righteous or pious. If the Vedas declare that 'Wise men call God and think of Him in diverse ways', the paths to reach Him are many but the goal is one. The popular aspect of Hinduism is as grand as its deep intellectual aspect is sublime. It is a diamond with many facets. 'If a huge animal like an elephant to drink the juice of sugarcane has to break and twist the cane, an ant can get its desire satisfied by the grains of readymade sugar crystals.' Only there should be an earnest desire to partake of the sweetness. If the *Bhagavat Dharma* has elevated the low in the past and worked miracles, there is no reason why it should not do so again in the modern times also. Has not Sri Krishna given an assurance, 'I hold myself responsible for the welfare of all those that come unto Me in all sincerity'? Let these words be the sheet-anchor of a layman.

G. A. CHANDAVARKAR



## VISISHTADVAITA OF SRI RAMANUJA<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of our discussion of the philosophy of Sri Ramanuja, we should make quite clear the distinction between the definitions of knowledge made by Sri Sankara and Sri Ramanuja; for upon this distinction is based the entire difference between the two great philosophers of India; and if properly understood, it will be understood how the same truth may be viewed in different lights.

According to Sri Sankara, knowledge is self-luminous, Intelligence itself, which illumines other objects of knowledge, and is therefore apart from, and beyond the relation of, subject and object. Relative knowledge is not true knowledge, is not pure Consciousness though grounded upon it. Knowledge, by itself, is absolute. It is the Atman, Light itself. Relative knowledge is *infinite knowledge finitized*.

Sri Ramanuja, on the other hand, does not recognize knowledge as self-luminous and absolute. Knowledge, he declares, is always relative, and there is always a distinction between subject and object. Briefly, Sri

Ramanuja does not admit *Nirvikalpa* type of knowledge in the sense in which Sri Sankara accepts it. Sri Ramanuja was at heart a-Bhakta, a devotee, who preserved his distinction from Brahman in order to enjoy the bliss of Divine Love. And his philosophy is one of devotion, not indeed merely emotional in its nature but based on careful reasoning.

One other point of difference between the two great philosophers should be noted. What Sri Sankara calls Maya, which is neither real nor unreal, and which, when joined to Brahman, the Absolute, attributeless and impersonal, becomes the personal Isvara or God, Sri Ramanuja calls the Sakti or Power which in its nature is real and eternally co-existent with Brahman. Thus Sri Ramanuja does not accept the impersonal, attributeless Brahman of Sankara but rather the existence of an eternal personal Brahman who is the repository of all blessed qualities.

### THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Perception, inference, and scripture are the valid sources of knowledge; and they also are valid on all levels as affirmations of reality. Unlike Sri

<sup>1</sup> This paper gives a brief synopsis of the philosophy of Srivaishnavism as expounded by Sri Ramanuja, and may be read as a continuation of 'Visishtadvaita: Two of its Great Teachers' contributed by the same writer, to the January issue. Bearing on that article we wish to add a note of correction: Alvars and Acharyas form two different orders in the Srivaishnava cult, and Nathamuni, grandfather of Yamunacharya, was an Acharya, and not an Alvar as stated in the second paragraph there. In connection with the incident narrated in the third paragraph, as against the Pandya many prefer Chola country, as Yamuna was born in the Chola country, at Viranarayana-puram. The term 'Alvar' was explained there as 'he who rules the world by his love and devotion to God'. The meaning generally accepted in the tradition of the sect is 'he who is immersed in the love of God, or in Divine attributes'. The Acharya who was referred to as 'Sribhashya' in the third paragraph was better known as Bhashya Bhatta or Mahabhashya Bhatta.—Ep.

Sankara, Sri Ramanuja does not admit the distinction between illusory perception and true perception, for he declares that even in illusory perception, so-called, there is some perception of reality. Thus all knowledge has an element of reality and all experience has its validity.

Sri Ramanuja's theory of *Dharma-bhuta-jnana*, or consciousness as an attribute, explains the three-fold function of knowledge; it possesses reality; it has the power to reveal the truth; and it can reveal the truth of Brahman.

So long as man, owing to his imperfections imposed by Karma, is crippled in knowledge, Brahman may not be revealed to him. But after he has been purified, he may have immediate intuition of God. This immediate intuition, as we have elsewhere remarked, is not the highest transcendental consciousness described in the Upanishads and by Sri Sankara, as Turiya but rather a transcendental, supersensuous experience of God as a Personal Being which comes through absorption in meditation and devotion. This revelation of God in meditation possesses a self-certifying character, and this truth that God is so revealed in the heart of man is borne witness to by the seers and sages of the Upanishads as well as by saints and seers of all ages and in all lands.

#### BRAHMAN OR GOD

In the Upanishads we read, 'The knower of Brahman attains the highest.' This text expresses the unity of the three-fold nature of wisdom; namely, Tattva or intellectual and philosophic understanding of Brahman; Hita or the means and methods of realizing Him; and

Purushartha—that He is the highest and supreme goal, and knowledge of Him is the highest attainment.

Let us first try philosophically to comprehend the nature of Brahman. This is Tattva: Brahman is determinate and can therefore be defined by a statement of His essential attributes. In the words of the Upanishads, 'Brahman is Satya, or real, Jnana or conscious, and Ananta or infinite.' Sri Sankara does not consider these as attributes of Brahman but as substantives identical with Brahman; that is to say, Brahman is existence itself, knowledge itself, infinity itself. But Sri Ramanuja accepts these as essential qualities of Brahman; that is to say, Brahman has reality, self-consciousness, and infinitude as His attributes.

Brahman is the basis of all existence and the supreme goal for He is also the supreme good. The universe is comprised of Chit, the sentient, and Achit, the non-sentient. Both Chit and Achit have their source and basis in Brahman, and He is also the indwelling Self within all, and He is the ruler of all.

Brahman is both the first cause and the final cause of the universe of the sentient and the insentient. 'Brahman is one without a second. He wills to be many', we read in the Upanishads, and He differentiates Himself into the manifold universe of the living and the non-living. This fact does not, however, mean that the act of creation had an absolute beginning in time. But the universe alternates between the phases of evolution and involution. In the phase of involution the entire universe remains latent in Brahman, and creation or evolution is the actualization of that latent form. The one becomes the many,

not in the pantheistic sense of emanation, but in the sense that Brahman by exercise of His will evolves the twenty-four categories and incarnates Himself directly in the Jivas or individual souls. Brahman is the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe. 'From Him the universe has emerged, in Him it exists, and into Him it returns.' God, as the source and support of the universe, has transformed Himself into the cosmic manifold; and He is the indwelling Self in His creation, the ruler and director of the cosmic process without Himself being affected by its evil. This evil is the result of the Karma of individuals, for whom God is the dispenser of the law. Indeed, all Indian philosophers believe in the Law of Karma, which explains the differences and the causes of evil and suffering existing in the world. But God remains unaffected by evil and is forever absolutely good.

God, though He has transformed Himself into the universe of sentient and insentient forms, remains distinct from them. Matter is the object of experience, individual souls are the experiencing subjects, and God is the Lord and ruler of all. He is defined in the Upanishads as Satyam, the true; Jnanam, knowledge; and Anantam, the infinite. Sri Ramanuja, in commenting on this text, points out that because of these distinctive attributes, God is above and beyond changing phenomena, which are matter, and distinct from individual souls caught in its meshes. Thus, though the universe is a transformation of Brahman, He remains by His nature beyond change, and, though immanent, He is transcendent.

So does Sri Ramanuja define God as the repository of infinite noble and blessed qualities, 'not only differentiating Himself into the cosmos but absolutely distinct from it,' yet again, 'He is their stuff and soul'.

Brahman, then, is related to the cosmos as the soul is related to the body. As a man has a soul and a body, and as the soul, though distinct from the body, yet controls and guides it, lives in it, and uses it as an instrument; in the same way Brahman is the soul of the universe, the sustenance and source of all beings within it, and the ruler over all. This soul and body relationship between Brahman and the cosmos brings to light and harmonizes the three sorts of relations defined by Sri Ramanuja: 'Adhara and Adheya—support and the thing supported—Niyamaka and Niyamya—the controller and the controlled—Seshin and Sesha—the Lord and His servant.' Professor P. N. Srinivasachari, a deep student of Sri Ramanuja, speaks of this triune relationship thus:

'The relation of Adhara and Adheya (container and the contained) is from the point of view of metaphysics which defines Brahman as real (satya), conscious (jnana), and infinite (ananta). This relation emphasizes the inner unity of Reality. The relation of Niyamaka and Niyamya (controller and the controlled) brings out the transcendental goodness of God and His redemptive impulse. The relation of Seshin and Sesha (the Lord and His servant) satisfies the highest demands of ethics and aesthetics by defining God as the supreme Lord for whose satisfaction the world of Chit (sentient) and Achit (insentient) lives, moves, and has its being. The relation of body and soul com-

bines all the three together and serves as an analogical representation of spiritual truth.'

God as the controller of the universe, is absolute good and the redeemer of all beings in the universe. Evil and suffering, be it repeated, are caused by the individual's Karmas. Karmas—good or evil deeds—create happiness or misery; but by Karmas alone man cannot redeem himself. The grace of God alone can save him; God is therefore the saviour. In His infinite love and absolute goodness, He is for ever merciful, for He even incarnates in human forms to redeem the prodigal and to rejoice in the ecstasy of communion with them. The *Gita*, as we have seen, expounds the idea of Avatara, or divine incarnation. And Sri Ramanuja reveals the fact that the central motive of God in descending to earth in human form is His love for humanity and His desire to save it.

#### JIVAS OR INDIVIDUAL SOULS

The finite self is not a separate self-existent entity but an organ, an element of Brahman. He is a part of Brahman, essentially different from Him but inseparably bound to Him. The finite self is Anu or 'atomic like the point of a goad' though he admits of no spatial division from the fact that he is spirit. The finite self then is an essential attribute (Prakara) of God; and as substance and attributes, though inseparably associated together, are yet absolutely distinct from each other; so God as substance is related to individual souls as His attributes. As inseparably associated with God, the individual self is eternal; and as distinct from Him, he has a distinct personality of

his own and a free will. But God, being also the inner ruler of the cosmos, which forms His body, 'He makes the soul act'. Not that man's acts are good or evil as guided or forced by God, but that He permits choice to the individual either to follow the path of good or evil. Eventually, however, He restores all souls unto Himself by His grace. Man's choice of good or evil, in short, lies in a free will. That makes him responsible for his actions, while God remains unaffected by man's deeds.

Free will is, furthermore, a gift of God in order that man may eventually free himself from the meshes of 'ignorance' and grow into 'personality of God.' Though Sri Ramanuja tries to refute the doctrine of Maya as expounded by Sri Sankara, he is obliged to admit in the final analysis the existence of Maya or ignorance in man, for the self, he believes, has forgotten its Divine origin and its Divine destiny and tends to identify itself with matter until it has become subject to the evils of Samsara or empirical experience. The true Self, which is an eternal mode of God, has degenerated into 'ego' by becoming a mode of matter. We free ourselves from this ignorance of ego when we surrender ourselves to God, our divine source. Our free will, a gift of God, finds fulfilment of its purpose when we live in conformity to the will of God, who is our divine source and the Self of our selves. The poet Tennyson in two lines sums up the implications of free will and self-surrender:

'Our wills are ours we know not why,  
Our wills are ours to make them Thine.'

## THE SUPREME GOAL

God is the Tattva, the truth; He is the Hita, the ways and means; and He is the Purushartha, the supreme goal. God as reality is not only the Divine source of our existence, but He is also the goal of experience.<sup>2</sup> Not only must we give intellectual assent to the truth that we live, move, and have our beings in God, but we must have the spiritual consciousness of this truth. Like all true saints and philosophers, Sri Ramanuja held that God can be known and realized, that a vision of His Being is possible for man, and that man must strive for that attainment. And he realized, like all saints, that the vision of God is vouchsafed to man by God Himself out of the infinity of His love and grace.

Self-effort and divine grace are not opposed to each other, neither is Divine grace conditional. In the words of Sri Ramakrishna, the breeze of Divine grace is blowing, but we must set sail to catch it. In the same way Sri Ramanuja explains how we must learn to love God, to serve Him, and to meditate on Him; and then, as spiritual hunger grows in us, we experience a deluge of love and Divine grace flowing from Him and flooding our whole being. This, he says, is the culmination of spiritual experience, when thus realizing His unbounded love for us we find complete refuge in Him. This is the ideal of self-surrender or Prapatti, which is not extinction of self but rather a union of our wills with His.

Sri Ramanuja did not believe in a complete identity or union with God. For him Kainkarya or living in the

service of God, was the supreme ideal and the consummation of spiritual life. This ideal of service, however, must not be confused with the ideal of modern Christianity of *helping God to realize His own fulness*. In this ideal of Christian service there exists a strong element of egotistical pride. God does not need our help, but we realize *our* fulness by loving and serving Him.

Sri Ramanuja did not, however, believe in *Jivan-mukti*, or liberation in this life, but rather in *Videha-mukti* or release from Karma and ignorance after death — passing 'through the path of light' to our permanent home in God. The Self then realizes union with God as His body, His part, His attribute. Never is there a dissolution of Jivahood or individual personality. Professor P. N. Srinivasachari has beautifully summarized this ideal of freedom in the following words :

'Release is not freedom in embodiment but freedom from embodiment; it refers to the return of the *prakara* or *mukta* (released soul) to his home in the absolute. (Ramanuja's absolute, however, is not the Absolute proper—but the Personal God). *Mukti* (freedom) is beyond the range of materialism and mentalism and involves the intuition of the infinite as well as its attainment. The finite has its roots in the infinite and in *mukti* there is the coalescence of content without the abolition of existence. When the freed self sees God face to face, its logical outlook becomes a spiritual insight, and freed from the nescience of empirical life it expands into omniscience. It has a sense of the infinite and sees everything with the eye of the all-self. When the self is Brahmanized, it is stripped of its

<sup>2</sup> Compare: 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.'

self-hood and sense of separateness, shakes of the shackles of *karma* based on *kama* (desire) and effaces itself in spiritual service and solidarity. The finite remains, but the fetters of finitude and individualism are removed.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE WAYS AND MEANS OF ATTAINMENT

In explaining *Hita* the practical aspect of his philosophy, Sri Ramanuja insists that God is the Lord of Love, and he prescribes *Bhakti Yoga*, the path of love and self-surrender, as the way of attainment of perfect bliss. 'Bhakti yoga', explains Swami Vivekananda, 'is a real, genuine search after the Lord, a search beginning, continuing, and ending in Love. One single moment of the madness of extreme love to God brings us eternal freedom.'

Sri Sankara laid great stress upon *Jnana Yoga*, the path of knowledge, but Sri Ramanuja upon *Bhakti Yoga*, the path of love. Both these saintly philosophers admit the need of love and devotion as well as the need of knowledge; only Sri Sankara preaches love as a means to knowledge and Sri Ramanuja that love is both means and end. In the same way, he admits knowledge as a means whereas Sri Sankara insists that knowledge is both means and end. I do not believe that after all there exists any real difference between the ways and means as expounded by them. Swami Vivekananda declares it is a distinction without much difference. When Sri Ramanuja speaks of knowledge as the means, he has in mind not transcendental knowledge but intellectual analysis; and

when Sri Sankara speaks of love as only a means, he has reference to a lower form of worship. Swami Vivekananda again remarks upon these differences: 'Each seems to lay a great stress upon his own peculiar method of worship, forgetting that with perfect love true knowledge is bound to come even unsought, and that from perfect knowledge, true love is inseparable.'

As he explains what meditation is, Sri Ramanuja also explains what true love means, and how with love and devotion we necessarily must meditate upon God. In his commentary upon the *Vedantasutras*, he makes an illuminating explanation of this interlocking of love and meditation:

'Meditation is a constant remembrance (of the thing meditated upon), flowing like an unbroken stream of oil poured out from one vessel to another. When this kind of remembering has been attained (in relation to God) all bondages break. Thus it is spoken of in the scriptures regarding constant remembering as a means to liberation. This remembering again is of the same form as seeing, because it is of the same meaning, as in the passage, "When He who is far and near is seen, the bonds of the heart are broken, all doubts vanish, and all effects of work disappear." He who is near can be seen, but he who is far can only be remembered. Nevertheless the scripture says that we have to see Him who is near as well as Him who is far, thereby indicating to us that the above kind of remembering is as good as seeing. This remembrance when exalted assumes the same form as seeing. . . . Worship is constant remembering as may be seen from the essential texts of scriptures. Knowing, which is the same as repeat-

<sup>3</sup> *Ramanuja's idea of the Finite Self*, by P. N. Srinivasachari.



ed worship, has been described as constant remembering. . . . Thus the memory, which has attained to the height of what is as good as direct perception, is spoken of in the Sruti (scripture) as a means of liberation. "This Atman is not to be reached through various sciences, nor by intellect, nor by much study of the Vedas. Whomsoever this Atman desires, by him is the Atman attained, unto him this Atman discovers himself." Here, after saying that mere hearing, thinking, and meditating are not the means of attaining this Atman, it is said, "Whom this Atman desires, by him the Atman is attained." The extremely beloved is desired; by whomsoever this Atman is extremely beloved, he becomes the most beloved of the Atman. So that this beloved may attain the Atman, the Lord himself helps. For it has been said by the Lord: "Those who are constantly attached to Me and worship Me with love—I give that direction to their will by which they come to Me." Therefore it is said that, to whomsoever this remembering, which is of the same form as direct perception, is very dear, because it is dear to the object of such memory-perception, he is desired by the Supreme Atman, by him the Supreme Atman is attained. This constant remembrance is denoted by the word Bhakti (love).<sup>4</sup>

With respect to the method and means of practising Bhakti Yoga, Sri Ramanuja remarks: 'The attaining of that comes through discrimination, controlling the passions, practice, sacrificial work, purity, strength, and suppression of excessive joy.'

By discrimination is meant, among other things, the distinguishing of

good food from bad. Body and mind being inter-related, purity of food is important, especially for beginners, in order to enable them to think pure thoughts.

Controlling the passions is the strengthening of the will and its guidance toward meditation on the Lord. 'By practice and non-attachment is it to be attained.'

Sacrificial work refers to the five great sacrifices referred to in the Vedas.

Purity is both external and internal. In the list of qualities conducive to purity, Sri Ramanuja enumerates the following: Satya, truthfulness; Arjava, sincerity; Daya, doing good to others; Ahimsa, non-injury; Abhidhya, not coveting others' goods—not thinking vain thoughts, not brooding over injuries received from others.

Strength refers to vigour of mind. Lastly is suppression of joy. Excessive mirth fritters away the energies of the mind, and yet we must be cheerful. Swami Vivekananda rightly says:

'The person who aspires to be a Bhakta must be cheerful. In the Western world the idea of a religious man is that he never smiles, that a dark cloud must always hang over his face, which, again, must be long-drawn with the jaws about collapsed. People with emaciated bodies and long faces are fit subjects for the physician, they are not Yogins. It is the cheerful mind that is persevering. It is the strong mind that hews its way through a thousand difficulties. And this, the hardest task of all, the cutting of our way out of the net of Maya, is the work reserved only for giant wills.'

---

<sup>4</sup> Translation by Swami Vivekananda.

Sri Ramanuja makes some slight distinction between Bhakti or love, and Prapatti, self-surrender. When love for God arises in the heart, the highest attainment comes in the surrender of our wills to God's will and we literally live in the service of God. But, as we have seen, according to Sri Ramanuja, there never comes complete union between man and God, between the lover and the beloved. And yet the testimony of the greatest lovers and devotees tells of the ultimate consummation of love in mystic union.—'I and my Father are one.'—The union which knows neither separation nor distinction.

To the student of Western philosophy, Sri Ramanuja's speculations concerning God and the Soul bear an astonishing resemblance to the subject with which Scholastic philosophy concerned itself during the Christian Middle Ages. The personality and the attributes of God, the Heavenly Father, the relation of man to God, the question of Free Will and Divine Grace, the submission of the will of

man to a Higher will than his, the union of human and divine, the relative positions of reason and love in the divine scheme, the vision of divine love and grace, and release after death of the soul from bondage—all of these make up the substance of the speculations of the Schoolmen through a period of several hundred years. From St. Augustine to St. Thomas Aquinas in whom we find the final synthesis of love and reason, the course of theological disputation followed these generally. And Sri Ramanuja, living in the tenth century, might well have been the spiritual father of the Christian Dante who wrote his great poem in the early thirteenth century. It is true that medieval Christianity placed far greater stress upon the sense of sin than is to be found anywhere in Hindu philosophy, but all the other mysteries of Christian theology seem to find their counterpart in the teachings of Sri Ramanuja.

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The following is the full text of the speech delivered by Dr. C. B. Reddi, M.A. (Cantab.) Hon. D.Lit., M.L.A., who presided over the memorial meeting conducted at Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras, on January 19, 1941, in connection with the seventy-ninth Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. —Ed.

It is both a pride and a pleasure to me to acknowledge my indebtedness to the organizers of this function for the very great honour they have done

to me by inviting me to participate in this day of adoration of one of the greatest of India's heroes. And I am particularly delighted that the speaker of the evening, Prof. Mahadevan has given us so powerful an account of the Life and Mission of Swami Vivekananda. I can't claim to be so profound a student of the Life of the Swamiji and of the setting in which he lived and worked and the great consequences that followed to our country, as our friend, Prof. Mahadevan. My study of the Swamiji,

compared to Mr. Mahadevan's, must be regarded as superficial.

It has been the good fortune of India that within the last century, after all the vicissitudes of Moghul regimes and the Mahratta and the Sikh reactions and the rest of the troublous period of Indian History, after all these and within the last century, there arose great thinkers and great leaders. It will not be possible to give an account of them all on this day when we are met to offer our grateful prayers to the spirit of a great man of genius. We might refer, for instance, to Swami Dayanand, who tried to create a new, more vigorous and powerful Hindu India. He created an organization, which in a sense, is nearer the ideal of 'aggressive Hinduism' than that of Swami Vivekananda. Arya Samaj is a power today. But from the point of view of India, with all her diversities, it would be rather difficult to regard it as a synthetic or unifying movement. I do not wish to say that synthetic movements as such are good and that movements that stand for the predominance of any one of the great racial or credal factors of India are bad. I pronounce no judgment. Evaluation is none of my business today. But the fact remains that the Arya Samaj cannot be regarded as a synthetic movement in the sense in which the Ramakrishna Mission could be said to be. Then we have the movement associated with the great name of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. As my friend put it, it has suffered from the anæmia inevitable to eclectic philosophies. We hear a good many of our contemporary friends advising us to take the best of everything and to combine them into a new prescription. This advice sounds

sweet; but such mixtures are impossible to prepare and most unpalatable to the taste—(Cheers). Faith is a life growth and not a mechanical combination. I don't know whether amongst our Muslim friends they have had leaders of like calibre. But judged from some of the movements in the Punjab, it is clear that amongst them also, there must have appeared geniuses worthy of universal applause. The question arises, 'In what sense is the great mission of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda of special value to us?' I happened to commence my college career just at the time when the Vivekananda star had risen in all its splendour. It was about 1893 that Swami Vivekananda, a beggar in the street, hardly able to convince the doubting Thomases, and even more than the doubting Thomases, the man eaten up with inferiority complex, came to Madras for funds to take him to America, to the Chicago World Congress of religions. Well, he went, he spoke and, he conquered—(Cheers). What was there peculiar in that message of Swami Vivekananda that captured the hearts and souls of the West.

I think his very first speech at that Congress struck the note of his Mission. It may be remembered that most of the Western nations are of the Christian persuasion. I speak with much hesitation because I have no right to speak of other religions, and if I fall into error, I hope, it will be attributed to my ignorance and not to ill-feeling. The first principle of a proselytising religion is to proceed on the hypothesis that it and it alone possesses a complete monopoly of the grace of salvation, that it alone can lead you to truth and God

and that no other religion could be its equal, even if it be not false. Therefore it tries to convert persons of other faiths to its own, and expand by conversion, which is a form of religious Imperialism. My friend put it in a somewhat different way. He said that they were associated with a person; and everything depended on what he was and did. But I would like to give it a broader outlook and therefore I call them historical religions. They have had a definite beginning and they have their growth and their developments. Now in both these respects Hinduism is different.

It may be that a person may ask 'Is there such a thing as Hinduism?' and stop to examine that question. I am not competent to answer. Granting that it is a religion, it can claim two special features. It is the first of all religions or religious philosophies that has laid down a great doctrine, the supreme doctrine of universal benevolence, namely, that there are many ways by which God could be reached, that the different religions, if followed sincerely, took you to the same God and that all religions were equally true, and good and that only conviction was necessary while conversion was not. Sri Ramakrishna's parable puts it in one way; the *Bhagavadgita* puts it in another. Even as there may be many ways of reaching the upstairs of a house, say by means of different stairs or ladders from the front and from the back, or by using a modern lift, which will take you in double the quicker time, if there is no accident in the meanwhile, so too through several different religions all could reach the same God. Rivers taking their rise in different mountains, flowing through different countries and in

such flow getting coloured in different ways, empty themselves in the same ocean. 'O Partha,' says the Lord in the *Bhagavatgita* 'people reach Me through different religions, if followed in all anxiety and sincerity.' That must have caused astonishment to our friends in America. In the robe of a Missionary of Hinduism, he says, 'I recognize that Christianity can give you salvation just as much as Hinduism'. Like the practical men they were, they must have asked him 'Why then did you come over here?'—(laughter and cheers).

The second thing is, Hinduism, as he put it, is ever-growing, ever-increasing and ever-taking you nearer the fullest truth. It has neither beginning nor end, but co-extensive with rational life. In that sense it is not a historical religion.

There are times when the Indian monsoon fails and our religion becomes dry like withered trees. Storms of foreign invasions blew and shook the trees by the root. Very well. Somehow the tree has survived and in a sense we have seen how under Dayanand, under Ramakrishna Paramahansa, under Arabindo Ghose, the saint of Pondicherry, it has been adapting itself to the times, growing towards the broader light of the latter day and putting forth fresh branches. The vitality of old Hinduism cannot be subdued.

As I told you I was here in Madras at the time when the Vivekananda star rose. Our people never thought it possible that a Hindu could make any name anywhere except in the Secretariate—(laughter). I believe he arrived in Madras in 1897. I had entered the Christian College in January 1897. Well, we could witness the enthusiasm of the town. Men

and women flocked to see, not because they understood him. It was a reaction from the inferiority complex. They did not know what he achieved in America. I do not suppose many except a few like my friend, Mr. C. Ramanujachariar, really interested themselves in his life and work. Here was a poor Indian, without any governmental patronage, without a Government job, going all alone and coming back with a wealth of glory and fame that the highest in the land could envy. He was a lion in every respect. He looked a lion and what was his message? My friend referred to it. He saw what our countrymen were—poor materially, and what was far worse was, feeling helpless spiritually, weak, timid, ever-surrendering, defeated, and calling it spiritual resignation—(laughter). To them he preached the doctrine of courage, of faith in themselves and in their potentialities, basing it on Vedanta which identified the essence of the individual soul with God. We are in essence God. Why then don't you feel omnipotent, instead of going about crushed and crumbling?

My friend, Mr. Mahadevan, referred to a certain inner conflict in the Swamiji. It was apparent to everyone. On the one side he was the apostle of Vedanta under which term he preached the three schools, and the three ways of reaching God—Jnana, Karma, and Bhakti Yogas. That was the spiritual Swamiji. On the other side, read his 'Speeches from Colombo to Almora'. They deal with the secular problems of India. That is the other side, and even more than the speeches there are the Epistles of Swami Vivekananda which it is my regret that every Indian school-boy does not read.

The Epistles of Swami Vivekananda must be read by everyone. There you see his scathing description of the utterly low, selfish and cowardly life of our men. He tells us, 'Look at the Japanese. How vigorously they are working for the uplift of the nation.'

He was appalled by our ignorance, by our poverty, and even more by the utter lack of union and organizing power. It was in that mood that the Swamiji gave a new orientation to his great Mission. After all, he said, 'Just as the soul has found a body, so must the religious message find its embodiment in social organization, in a political organization, in different organizations which have as their goal the betterment of life on earth.' To say that religion takes you to heaven and nowhere else, is like saying that our countrymen can manage Swaraj and nothing else. Undoubtedly at that time the Government viewed Vivekananda with suspicion. In those days Government would have viewed any important Indian with suspicion. No man could become innocent in the eyes of the bureaucracy of that time unless he was also useless and powerless. Powerlessness is the greatest guarantee of innocence. To be powerful and to go about telling people to become lions naturally produced a suspicious reaction.

My friend referred to a certain episode—the episode at Amarnath in Kashmir. I will tell you what it is. He was with some European disciples of his and he saw the images of Hindu Gods and Goddesses smashed and lying on the ground. It caused great sorrow and spiritual trouble to the Swamiji. As a Hindu he was indignant at the way in which such sacrilege and vandalism had been

perpetrated on the shrines. Then came an illumination, an illumination in the true Ramakrishna spirit, and the illumination was this. We need not interpret these things literally. It is enough if we understand them symbolically. The Great Mother appeared to him and said 'Why do you bother about the insult offered to me? Was I not powerful enough to protect myself or to take revenge if I had wanted to? Who are you to think of avenging the Gods and Goddesses?' Then Vivekananda reflected, 'Who am I to think of succouring the gods? Am I going to set the world right? It is all Providence, whose ways are unscathable. We are only his humble puppets.' But then he was a Kshatriya by birth and this mood of resignation did not last long. In him there was the man of action. You remember one of the insults which at one time he used to feel very keenly. He was not a Brahmin by birth and you remember the term in which he replied when told that he was a Sudra. I remember the phrase: 'If I am a Sudra that fellow is a pariah'. No doubt a more mellow orientation was given to his message and activities. But he never gave up the idea of social and general service to the country as one of the essential purposes of a religious mission. Only if there is food, the rest could follow. You can't preach religion to the starving. Material improvement is not materialism. Your economic and social status, your courage, culture, your power—these are all elements in your racial life and religion.

My friend very rightly pointed out that the Swamiji's first visit to America proved in him too rosy a view of the West and too much optimism.

I believe that Swamiji had certain experiences which created the optimism. You remember the two episodes. He was in the street almost overcome by fatigue and hunger. An aristocratic lady going that way saw him. She was immediately struck by his noble presence, asked him to go to her house and put him up as her guest and became his life-long friend. Hospitality, let me tell you, is one of the virtues of Western civilization and it is a very general and unrestricted hospitality since caste and community considerations do not come in. In this way the Swamiji received splendid welcome in many homes; and you remember what happened at the World Congress. The Swamiji became so popular that the Chairman, when he found the house emptying after laborious and dull lectures, would say: 'Towards the end of the meeting Swami Vivekananda will speak' and that would stop the exodus. When he went to London with that big reputation in America the London hostesses also, welcomed him and in spite of our political inferiority treated him with unreserved consideration and honour. The India Office was near. Naturally he visited it. Whatever might have been the nature of the climate, the atmosphere there too was very good. The result was that he mistook it all for the reception of his Vedanta and not the reception of Vivekananda, a proof of his modesty. Later he discovered that all these material antagonisms of races and nations could not be solved by spiritual prescriptions and that we must be a first class nation and power, if we must make ourselves respected and if our rights and religions are to be honoured. In the end came the large

synthesis wrought by his genius of which the embodiments are the Belur Mutt in Calcutta and more especially the Ramakrishna Missions with all their branches and hostels, and schools as in Madras and the relief and uplift work organized on a non-sectarian basis, extending help and charity to Hindu, Muslim, Christian and all. This is practical Vedanta, the Vedanta of life as well as of the Soul. My friend, Mr. C. Ramanujachariar, and his fellow-workers deserve the greatest credit for having made the Ramakrishna Mission a great material, but not materialistic, reality in Madras.

Years ago, after I returned from Cambridge in 1905 poor Swami Vivekananda the great, died at the early age of 39. I suppose there is something in the great proverb 'Those whom the Gods love, die young'. My first speech happened to be on Vivekananda, and I characterized him then as the greatest synthetic thinker that India had produced. In Gokhale, Naoroji, Pherozsha Mehta, and Malavyaji, we had splendid politicians, in Ashutosh Mukerji and Malavyaji we had noble educational organizers, in Dayanand we had a mind which revived Vedic Hinduism and in the great Ramakrishna we had one of the greatest apostles of all time who in his own life illustrated the highest spiritual virtues. Ramakrishna is the embodiment of what might be called the harmony of all religions that it is the pride of India not merely to preach, but to practise. Those who have read the life of Sri Ramakrishna know how for some time he actually embraced Islam, and realized God that way; how again he practised Christianity and realized God that way too. He had direct experience

of the equal truth and grace of all religions. But to Vivekananda belongs the further honour of having seen life and religion in all their aspects economical, educational, social, and political. Life is one and religion cannot be isolated beyond a certain limit.

A living religion spreads. If it is universal in its scope, it cannot rest being tribal or racial but must embrace all humanity. So Vivekananda felt that he had a message to the West. He organized the Missions which are now functioning in America and in Europe, in the true Ramakrishna spirit. I was in San Francisco. Naturally I visited the beautiful building in which the Ramakrishna Ashram is housed. It is their own property. Americans give you plenty of money even when they do not believe, just as even when we believe we don't—(Cheers). In New York and everywhere they attracted large audiences. So the message of Hinduism is of permanent and universal value. Reason appeals to all, whereas authority cannot. The core of Hinduism is philosophy—philosophy lived. The Hindu missionary need not base his appeal on what was said by this prophet or what was written in their books. He has to give reasons for the teaching of Rishis and appeal to the head as well as the heart. In this method, the mastermind is Vivekananda.

Being therefore a dynamic religion in which all fresh elements of knowledge and new methods of approach are assimilated, Hinduism has a permanent and ever growing mission.

We have met today as I told you to adore one of our greatest men. We must increase our knowledge of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and

the other disciples of the Paramahansa. The number of books dealing with them are many. There is Maxmuller's life of Ramakrishna. There is a big volume on him with a brief preface from Mahatma Gandhi. There are the anecdotes of Sister Nivedita; the gospel according to M; the charming books of Romain Rolland. Then only you will understand how the Narendra was inspired and what shapes the inspiration took. When you come to Vivekananda, there are a large number of books and on him also a book by the great French writer, Romain Rolland. Romain Rolland is a man of extensive culture, a specialist in the psychology of religion.

The one great lesson of Paramahansa's life history is to destroy egotism in man.

Before I conclude I must, in justice to myself and with a view to elicit discussion, mention for the first time here in public a thought which had been in my mind for some time past. What may be the origin of the noble Hindu doctrine of the equality of all religions? Not that origin determines value. The lotus springs from the ooze but it is not ooze. All the same, science requires that we trace the origin and growth of philosophies and institutions. May not our doctrine that all religions are equally true and therefore conversions are unnecessary and undesirable be due to a desire on our part, actuated by the exclusive spirit of Caste and Tribe, to preserve inter-tribal peace and appease inter-Caste animosities by admitting equality while refusing unity or fusion and even touch? We have, as you know, the Svadharma theory, according to which the Brahmin by performing the duties of

his birth, the Kshatriya his, and each several Caste its Svadharma, attain salvation while they remain distinct and separate in the social order. We hold that all Svadharma lead to the same goal, as illustrated by the charming Dharma Vyadha episode in the Mahabharata, but that there should be no forsaking of one's own Dharma and adopting the Dharma of another Caste or community, a doctrine which tries to allay animosity, while preserving differences and preventing co-mingling of social orders; in other words, an ultimate transcendental equality in Heaven with inequalities on earth and no possibility of fusion. It seems to me that the doctrine of the equal salvational grace and power of all religions may be no more than the Svadharma writ large; that is to say, tribal exclusiveness raised to the dignity of a world formula of universal toleration. Undoubtedly it serves to preserve peace between the different religions. But does it not also serve to prevent union? No doubt we can take refuge in the formula 'unity in diversity'. But it all depends on which factor we lay the emphasis—promotion of unity or the preservation of diversity. And if unity is good, could union be bad? Hinduism has another difficulty in converting people from other religions, namely, the problem of what Caste to convert into, from which most other religions are free. This view explains the non-congregational character of Hinduism. Christianity and Islam, generally speaking, are congregational religions. With us, when worshipping in the temple, the different social orders must occupy different distances from the image. Caste and congregation do not go together easily, though in our later



Bhajanas we did introduce the congregational form of worship.

But as I said before, values do not depend on origins. It is a great thing to have minimized friction and maximized tolerance in a world from which differences could not altogether be eliminated. In its influence on Hindu life it has to some extent been both a healing and an ennobling doctrine, but has it succeeded in curing our social sores completely and giving us the strength of congregational religions? The defensive power of Hinduism is great; but its tribal character, while it does not prevent its philosophy being accepted by all, has not served the purposes of inner solidarity or external expansion. Our ideas are accepted by all, but our life is not; nor do we want it to be, since it involves taking outsiders into our families at which we shy. Universalism in idea and tribalism in life—that is our paradox. All are gods in essence, but if the high caste god touches a low caste one, he must undergo purification!

Nor are other religions free from racialism and other contradictions of their universality. For instance, the European Christian Missionary who offers the coloured convert thrones of gold and equality with him in Heaven, is generally most reluctant to offer a cane chair in his drawing

room. And so such antitheses in varying degrees are present everywhere, and the ethical effort of man should be directed at producing a truer harmony and making practice conform to precept.

We Hindus are trying now to evolve a more liberal life in healthier illustration of our liberal philosophy and I am sure under the influence of the Ramakrishna Mission, the Arya Samaj, and other spiritual forces and our political necessities, the process will gather strength day by day until the goal is reached.

Swami Vivekananda was an iconoclast. He went the full length of his doctrine. The man who satirized good people as good-for-nothing people, could not be expected to be satisfied with half measures. You remember his derisive description of actual Hinduism as Touch-me-not-ishness; and he scorned the concentration of our attention on ceremonial purities and what to eat and what not to eat. He refused to observe these restrictions in his own life and was as cosmopolitan in his living as he was universal in his Vedanta. I wonder if Hindu Society can ever reconstitute itself on a Casteless basis and make the range of its recent efforts at Sanghatan and conversion more powerful and more widespread.

---

## MAN-MADE AND NOT GOD-MADE

**Professor K. S. Srikantan, M.A.**, points out in these paragraphs that the authors of our Traditional Codes did not claim for their works the authority of infallible divine words.—Ed.

To a student of Hindu Culture, what amuses most is the opinion held by a large number of Hindus, even today, that they were always bound by the rigid rules of the Dharma Sastras. Even a casual glance through the Smritis and Srutis, however, will make it clear that the writers of the sacred literature never wanted the people to look upon the regulations as sacrosanct, and they themselves insisted upon the people to follow the rules and regulations approved by society. This becomes abundantly clear from Baudhayana's description of the five-fold differences between the contemporary practices of the South and North. 'Any practice is permissible' says Baudhayana 'in that respective locality if it is sanctioned by the *Sadachara*.' (*Sadachara* was the current social practice followed by respectable persons.)

The very Smritics declare that Dharma changes with age (Parasara, Sukta 22). As a matter of fact, the Smrities themselves were the embodiment of contemporary *Sadachara*. In short, the Smritics and Srutis were not the cause, but the consequence of our customs and manners. This explains the numerous Smritis we have and the often inexplicable contradictions in them. Parasara makes it very clear when he says that *Manusmriti* was suited for Krita age, the Smriti of Gautama for Treta,

that of Sankha-Likita for Dvapara and that of Parasara for Kali. The Smritis have anticipated the possibility and advisability of changes in their rules. This was perhaps the reason for making the Parishads and other assemblies of the learned, the final authority in matters of religious dispute. Both Gautama and Manu, not to speak of others, laid down that a Parishad consisting of about ten persons, learned and religious, was to be the guide of Society in matters which were either doubtful, or not anticipated by the Sastras.

Another Sastra, while describing the marriage customs, very significantly observes 'Local customs are numerous and various, even though they are not mentioned by the Sastrakaras. The commonly accepted theory that *Sadachara* was valued only if it was not contrary to the dicta of Sruti and Smriti simply indicated deep reverence for the Sastras, but by no means always consistent with the actual practice' (Sukra). Another poet goes a step further and declares that the usual list of authoritative Smritis is not exhaustive and that even today a new Smriti may be composed which would be authoritative for posterity.

That the Smritis could never have been binding on the members of the Hindu Society is also clear from the fact that no two Smritis agree entirely, but each claims to be the most authoritative. Brihaspati advances the view that a Smriti opposed to *Manusmriti* was to be discarded. Parasara claims that his own Smriti

is to be held authoritative in preference to all, while Gobhila very shrewdly says that in case of difference of opinion the views of the majority were to hold.

In the face of the above citations, it is really strange that the so-called Sanatanists should object to any social reform on the ground that the Smritis do not sanction it. To speak the truth, they are only insulting the Smritikaras by thus standing in the way of Indian social progress. For it should be remembered that the Smritikaras themselves never wanted that their rules should be blindly followed. The anxiety of the Smritikaras to adjust their regulations to the needs of Society is particularly clear from what they say about Truth. All the Law-givers allow the speaking of untruth on certain occa-

sions because the Society could not be expected to do otherwise. 'In some cases, if a man, even though knowing the facts to be different, gives such false evidence from a pious motive, he does not lose heaven; such evidence they call the speech of gods.'

It is clear from what has been said above that the Smritis were man-made and not God-made. I am of opinion that all our problems would be solved if a new Smriti embodying all the changes that have taken place and those changes that are desirable in Hindu Society is brought out by some scholars of reputation and wisdom. It is time the Hindus wake up from their slumber and show to the world that they are worthy of the high traditions.

K. S. SRIKANTAN

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Letters of Swami Ramadas, Vol. I:  
PUBLISHED BY ANANDASHRAM, RAM-  
NAGAR, KANHANAGAD P.O. PRICE  
Rs. 1-8-0. PAGES 224.

The endearing flavour and abiding significance of this volume of letters (212 in number) of Swami Ramadas is best brought home to our readers by a string of representative quotations.

'God is at once personal and impersonal. He is the highest Truth, in whom are combined the attributes of infinite glory, power and greatness.' 'Our Atman is He, as Witness; our movements and actions are the work of his Shakti.' 'All movement in the universe, i.e., all activity, motion and work, belong to God's will or Shakti. . . . It is all the play of God's Power.' 'Nature is nothing but God Himself in manifestation, and all movements and changes therein, be they good or evil as they are usually described, belong to the same Divine Power.' 'To spiritualize life

means to divinize the whole world. To see the Divine at work and manifestation in all beings and things is to realize the supreme charm and glory of existence. The entire face of Nature then presents to the vision a beautiful and lovable picture, teeming with blissful activity.'

'Devotion to God means devotion to the truth dwelling within your heart. External worship may help you in realizing Him, but it may also hinder you if you cling to it as the end of life. True vision is universal, because Truth is universal. Real freedom and joy are born of this vision. Surrender of your ego is the way. Surrender takes you beyond the gunas and brings you face to face with Reality.'

'Self-surrender itself means true liberation.' 'Give up the false notion that you are the doer, which is the cause of ignorance and therefore of doubt and misery.'

'Sages point out surrender to God's will, i.e., to His Power or Shakti, as the path

to Self-realisation. This surrender is effected only by the total eradication of the ego.' 'He is our Mother. We are His children. He is our all in all. Life is sweet and blessed when it is lived for His sake.' 'There is nothing so blissful as devotion to His lotus feet. Our attachment to the ever-changing and perishable forms about us is the cause of our misery.' 'This God of Love manifests in our heart when it is filled with compassion, forgiveness and peace.' 'Let us be humble, pure, gentle, simple and loving.' 'Sri Ram is dwelling ever in our hearts, how can we dare to call ourselves "sinners"? The ego of ignorance is utterly unreal.'

'Verily, like the musk-deer, the aspirant seeks at first the Truth of his being outside, while not only is it within him but he is the Truth himself. External aids such as Gurus and teachers do help; but they merely point out the way, the way to go within. Everyone has to make the necessary effort himself to gain the inward vision, to behold the Truth. The path is one of self-discipline and self-control. Experience is the guide. Hanging on to an external form, be it that of a Guru, or an image or a book, can but lead the aspirant deeper into the morass of ignorance. God, truth, call It by any name, is within you—nay you are It. Tat-twamasi—that thou art—is the mahavakya to be realized.'

'So turn back your mind to Truth within. Do you believe, any body can make you free and happy? Think well, nobody can do that for you—this is the inevitable answer. You are the pure, ever-existent, free and blissful Truth. Realize this. Give up praying and fawning before something outside yourself. The whole life is spent in these futile cries and appeals. Feel the presence of the Lord within yourself and surrender your all to Him. Take it that you and the world are the personal expressions of that impersonal Being, who is infinite and universal.'

'Divine love is impersonal. So it is difficult to put it into practice until we know the Truth which is impersonal, i.e., until we rise to that consciousness in which all thought, form and individuality are transcended. Truth is pure existence, consciousness and bliss. It is at once universal and eternal. Hence to realize it is to

attain liberation and joy—moksha and ananda.'

'We can get the darshan of God in any form we idealize, either as Shiva, Krishna or Rama; but it must be understood that the conception of these forms is only an aid to concentration, so that we might ultimately transcend all names and forms, to realize the all-pervading, immutable, limitless, and eternal Absolute. The universe of name and form is a passing panorama in that absolute Existence. Realisation consists in knowing our oneness with this Truth. This realization is moksha, i.e., liberation—liberation from ignorance and the attainment of immortal joy and peace.'

'From the standpoint of the Absolute there is no "birth and rebirth". All that appears as name and form is only a manifestation, changing and unreal, of God. The one Eternal Truth—colourless and changeless—is the only Reality; all else is false. But from the relative standpoint, there is rebirth, the ignorance-ridden jiva is necessarily whirling through the cycle of births and deaths, until he attains the knowledge of his absolute nature.'

'The truth is, God only is, both as manifest and unmanifest. All movement and activity, all forms and names in the universe, belong to God's Will or Shakti. The notion, "I am the doer", is utterly false. It is the all-pervading Divine Power alone that is responsible for all that is going on in us, through us, and in the entire universe. By following up this easy path of self-surrender we realize that we are the Absolute Truth. But before we have achieved this knowledge, we believe, through ignorance, that we have a separate existence as individuals, apart from God, and that we are the doers. So long as this ignorance persists we have to perform sadhanas for the attainment of the knowledge of the Truth. Here Purushartha comes into play. Purushartha ceases on the dawn of knowledge—a knowledge which makes us realize, that God is all in all.'

'Indeed the body is but an instrument. The Divine Power, moving within, utilizes and manipulates it, urged on by the will of the supreme, immortal, indwelling spirit of God. He is at once the Power, and the static, immutable, eternal Brahman. So it is emphatically declared; God is all in all, and

is all. Let us leave it to Him, the one sole Lord of all existences, to use the instrument, i.e., our body as He wills. When we become conscious that He works it, then we realize that we are free. Freedom is not a state to be attained but to be realized. We are ever the immortal Spirit pervading the universe. All forms and names, the result of movement and power, are the Spirit's manifestation. When changes occur in the manifestation, the eternal Atman within remains unaffected. The alterations that take place in the body are only on the surface. This is the mystery to be understood and realized, which, when so realized, brings us the ecstasy and eternal bliss of liberation here and hereafter. Therefore, let us know that we are the deathless, changeless Atman, Sat-Chit-Anand, whose expression the universe is. The clouds appear and disappear in the sky but the sky remains untouched, the same always. Similarly bodies appear, and bodies disappear, while the immortal Atman, which we are, remains ever the same and the same. So please give up all anxiety about the body. It is in the hands of the Lord.'

'The secret of God-realization is to maintain perfect poise of peace, in the midst of intense activity, and in such activity to enjoy bliss. Shakti is universal love and bliss. Shiva is absolute peace. This ineffable and supreme state of peace and bliss is attained by surrendering all your actions to Shakti and identifying yourself with Shiva. Rise above the notions of good and evil, sin and virtue, which are merely false dharmas of the mind, and dedicate all your actions to the Divine Master of your being and of world existence. . . . The Lord is the doer of all things. . . . your actions, whatever they be, belong to Shakti. You perform sadhana because He wills so; when you don't, it is His will again, that has determined it. . . . Your separate individuality does not exist in the absolute existence of God; and in the field of action you are merely an instrument in the hands of Shakti. So you are utterly He and His.'

'Repeat Ram mantram always, and you attain the cosmic consciousness spoken of in the Gita. . . prem is the very perfume that comes out of a life of simplicity, purity, humility, compassion and self-sacri-

fice'; 'please note Name is Brahman Himself. Repeat the mantram audibly and fix your attention on the sound produced by the repetition and you will easily attain concentration.'

'Bhakti without jnana is either an imitation or unsteady and passing wave of emotion. Jnana without Bhakti is a tasteless and concocted thing. Jnana or Bhakti without Karma, is spiritually magnified selfishness.'

'All life is one—all movement is of one divine Principle. Fixed in this Truth, be sure, fearless, blissful and active. Judge not action or inaction by any criterion, ethical or dogmatic. Live by the standard of the highest Truth which is your Self.'

It is unavoidable that private letters of this type would reflect the personal feelings and experiences of the writer. It is not unlikely that one may attribute that to his egotism; a fitting reply to this is given by Swami Ramadas himself in letter 124. We congratulate the publishers in making available to the spiritual aspirants in general this charming spiritual document.

**The Ageless Mysteries:** BY FAITH HART. PUBLISHED BY MESSRS. RIDER & Co., PATERNOSTER HOUSE, 34, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C. 4. 1940. PAGES viii+96. PRICE 4s. 6d.

This book purports to guide those who are interested in understanding the meaning of the symbols and allegories of ancient scriptures consistent with modern scientific knowledge. The writer avers that 'no new thing is told'. What he has attempted is only to point out how the Ancient Wisdom runs parallel with modern knowledge, modern science. The novelty of the interpretations given to the symbols, no doubt, imparts interest to the book.

The book is constructed in ten chapters of which those on 'Intuition—The Inner Voice', 'The Law of Reincarnation', 'The Astrological Path', and 'The Necessity for Health' may add to the readers' knowledge. The following two extracts would acquaint us with the meaning which the writer gives to the term 'intuition', a term used by different writers and which conveys different vague notions. He says, (1) 'Intuition, then, is the faculty of tuning in consciousness to the eternal spiritual vibrations, and this faculty is awakened

by certain fundamental laws, leading the mind to being able to work forward on future events.' (2) 'To function intuitively at will to any degree of perfection on higher planes, the first step is purity of life in thought and action. This method will prevent the interposition of any barrier between the exterior and interior self; for purity of life establishes a harmonious relationship between the two.'

The main current of thought which one does not fail to miss in any chapter of the book is that without proper cultivation of all the faculties of man—intellectual, moral, and the rest—any higher spiritual achievement is impossible. Study of external and internal nature is helpful for spiritual progress; negligence of either upsets the balance. The author rightly stresses the harmony of the two when he says, 'Unite the two great principles, the spiritual and material laws, and the combination will give an accurate perspective.'

The get-up of the book is attractive.

**The Natural Cure of Eye Defects:**  
BY DR. L. KAMESWARA SARMA,  
M.A., N.D. PUBLISHED BY THE NATURE-  
CURE PUBLISHING HOUSE, PUDUKOTTAI,  
S. I. Ry. 1940. PAGES 62. PRICE AS. 8  
OR SH. 1.

Many of the common diseases we see around us are due to ignorance or insufficient knowledge of the rules of Hygiene—diets, sanitation, preservation of food-stuffs, etc. Many a disease would not at all arise if one observes the laws of health with some caution. The disease of any one organ of the human body may be reasonably attributed to the changes and disturbances in any other part of the body. Just as the prosperity of each individual goes to make up the prosperity of the nation, so also it is on the proper functioning of every organ the health of the entire body depends. The system of treatment known as Naturopathy therefore advises treatment of the body as a whole in order to cure diseases of a particular organ such as the eye.

This small book dealing with the 'Natural Cure of Eye Defects' contains much useful advice. First by way of introduction, the author describes the Physiology of the eye and points out the bad consequences of wearing spectacles and drugging and

surgical method for the treatment of the eye. An interesting point discussed in the book is that during accommodation whether the eye as a whole undergoes a change, or the contraction and expansion of the crystalline lens alone takes place. In support of the former view the results of Dr. Bates' experiments are referred to.

In the subsequent chapters, the causes of eye defects, natural methods of cure such as the proper use of sunlight, diet, and baths, and Bates' Exercises—Palming, Swinging, Aids to vision, and the rest—are explained. Though the Naturopathic methods can be practised at home yet minute attention to details is quite necessary before expecting any successful cure. The details of treatment given to many patients and results got thereby go to strengthen the practical value of Nature-Cure.

**The Immanence of God:** BY MADAN  
MOHAN MALAVIYA. PUBLISHED BY THE  
GITA PRESS, GORAKHPUR, INDIA. PRICE  
AS. 2.

This small tract from the pen of our venerable national leader gives in a nutshell the essence of Sanatana Dharma as set forth in the scriptures and warranted by the unbiassed observation of the nature of the universe around us. The popularity and appeal of this publication is well attested by the fact that the copy in our hands is the third edition, which brings the total copies struck to over eight thousand.

**The Divine Message:** BY HANUMAN-  
PRASAD PODDAR. PUBLISHED BY THE GITA  
PRESS, GORAKHPUR, INDIA. PRICE 9 ps.  
ONLY.

The author has done a timely service by assembling in this booklet of seventeen pages some of the salient rules of conduct and discipline that are thoroughly non-sectarian, for the guidance of religious aspirants. The elimination of non-essentials and the brevity of it admirably serve to focus the attention on what is of immediate and supreme importance. Only an ever-increasing number of such publications could remove the slur cast on later-day Hinduism which has lost sight of the immediate demands of religion, side-tracked by blind ritualism on the one side and dry

philosophy unsupported by life on the other.

**The Divine Name and Its Practice:**  
BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR. PUBLISHED  
BY THE GITA PRESS, GORAKHPUR, INDIA.  
PAGES 96. PRICE AS. 3.

The title of the book explains the contents. There cannot be any reasonable doubt that for the realization of the Divine there is no method more facile or less liable to danger of any kind than the constant and sincere habit of remembering and repeating the Divine Name. Sincere Japa protects one against all profitless

thoughts that intrude into one's consciousness, purifies the subconscious mind, and finally makes one divine. The present book may be used as a reliable guide-book by all who wish to get ample light on the method, efficacy, and value of the Nama-Sadhana or mental and vocal repetition of Divine Names, as well as the examples and authority for that religious discipline. We believe that the author has been successful in his attempt to represent in a worthy fashion the tradition embodied in the scriptures regarding Japa in an easily understandable and orderly style.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

**The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home,  
Mylapore, Madras.**

**Report for the Year 1940.**

In this document the Management of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home presents the thirty-sixth annual report on the working of the educational institutions under its care, forming the largest educational Centre of the Mission. A descriptive and statistical abstract of it is presented in the following paragraphs for the knowledge of all interested in juvenile education.

**A. THE HOME:** (a) *Accommodation:* In 1940 a set of two quarters was added for the ward-masters making the number of quarters twelve. To provide for additional playground and for possible future expansion of the Home, a neighbouring cocoanut garden, about a little over 5½ acres in area, lying to the south-west of the present lay-out of the Home was purchased at a cost of Rs. 56,600. (b) *Admission and Strength:* Admissions to the Home are generally made once a year in the month of June and are restricted to the poorest among the best, merit being the guiding factor in selection. The year began with 181 students in the Home and 10 more were taken during the reported period; and of the total, 119 were studying in the Residential High School, 45 in the Industrial School, 23 in the Arts Colleges, 1 in the School of Indian Medicine, and 3 in the Medical College.

During the year under report the paying element was less than ten per cent of the total strength. (c) *Health:* The newly admitted boys were medically examined and their physical welfare was promptly attended to according to medical advice in all possible ways. The general health of the inmates was satisfactory, safeguarded as it was by a well-regulated life, a balanced diet, sanitary surroundings, and ample outdoor activities. (d) *Examinations and Scholarships:* Out of 35 students who appeared for the S.S.L.C., the University, and other Public Examinations 27 passed. One ex-student took the M.Litt. (Econ.) Degree, and another student who secured a first class Honours Degree in History took up research work in the University. Out of the 15 pupils that were declared eligible in the S.S.L.C. only 3 were retained in the Home for their continuance in the Intermediate College, while 2 joined the Industrial Course. Those who completed their Automobile Engineering Course took service or got apprenticed. During the year, five of the students who had completed the Diploma Course in Automobile Engineering were selected for the Ground Engineering section of the Indian Air Force. One joined the Royal Indian Navy. About half the number of students were in receipt of Government Scholarships, School Concessions, privately endowed scholarships or help towards fees from other sources,

and some were assisted by a 'Charity in Charity' Fund. (e) *Seva Praveena Samiti*: instituted in 1938, with the object of training students to wield responsibilities, to take initiative, and to organize and control work, in 1940 consisted of 15 experienced students elected by the general body. The Management entrusted to it suitable and necessary items of domestic and social service. (f) *Tutorial Guidance*: The inmates are divided into nine wards having separate ward-masters, all working under the warden, a Swami of the Mission. (g) *Physical training, Games, Garden work, and Music classes*: The Home provided the boys with classes in drill, Asanam exercises, and games, viz., foot-ball, hockey, badminton, and ring-tennis. The garden work done by the boys was well appreciated even by the judges of the School Garden Competition arranged by the Agri-Horticultural Society. Music classes were conducted thrice a week and individual-singing and group-singing were taught. The Home Musical Choir got the first prize for group-singing in the Education Week Inter School Competition. Occasionally the Choir was also invited by the A.I.R. to broadcast some religious songs and scenes from Dramas. (h) *Moral and Religious training*: Keeping in view Swami Vivekananda's dictum, 'Religion is the core of education', the Home has endeavoured to develop the religious consciousness in the students with the aid of daily Sastrie worship, congregational prayer in the beautiful Shrine, study of the *Gita* and the life and teachings of Saints and Godmen, elaborate observance of religious festivals and sacred days such as Navaratri and Akshayatriya, and holy excursions. (i) *Library and Reading Room*: The total number of volumes at the end of the year in the three Libraries was 13,437. The leading Dailies of Madras, in English, Tamil, and Telugu and nearly 50 periodicals from all over India and abroad were received.

The Home keeps in touch with its old boys through the *Ramakrishna Home and School Magazine*, through correspondence, and by other means.

**B. THE RESIDENTIAL HIGH SCHOOL:** The Course of studies is planned in accordance with the S.S.L.C. Scheme. The medium of instruction is Tamil in all

classes, and the different languages taught are English, Tamil, Sanskrit, and Hindustani. The optional subjects offered for the S.S.L.C. are Mathematics, Physics, and History. The School is equipped with laboratories and libraries. There are three departments for manual training, and the crafts taught during the year were weaving, wood-work, and cane-work. In addition to this, facilities were provided for Hobbies—photography, book-binding, printing, tailoring, bee-keeping, varnishing, painting, paper-making, and soap-making. The results at the Public Examination were satisfactory, 15 passing out of 17. The working of the Seva Sangham, the activities of the Literary Union, and the publication of the manuscript magazines were regular and well-conducted. During the year the pupils went on excursions to some places of educational importance and interest in the City.

**C. THE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL** prepares students in Automobile Engineering for the L.A.E. Diploma issued by the new Technological Examination Board. The Jubilee Workshop is fully equipped with precision tools and appliances, and undertakes all kinds of repairs to any make of Automobile, from ordinary running adjustment to complete overhauling and reconditioning and spray painting. Equipment for spray painting and battery charging and a Globe Auto-Hoist for efficient servicing are provided. In the Automobile section, minor repairs to and servicing of 212 motor vehicles and major repairs to and overhauling of 73 Cars were done during the year. In the Public Examination held in May, 1940, five students passed out of nine students sent up. With a view to give better coaching to students, the system of quarterly examinations and a selection examination for Diploma examination-going students were introduced in the year under report. In response to the request of the Military Department, a special Theory and Demonstration class in Automobile Engineering, covering a period of 3 months, was arranged for selected Driver Mechanics of the regular force. The total running expenditure on all the sections amounted to Rs. 54,116-2-4 and the total receipts to Rs. 52,787-12-8, thus leaving a deficit of Rs. 1,328-12-8 to be met from the Revenue Reserve Account.



**D. THE BOYS' SCHOOLS AT TYAGARAYA-NAGAR:** The Ramakrishna Mission High School, started in June, 1932 and conducted in temporary sheds all this period, occupied its new building in last June. The building consists of a spacious hall, a well-equipped laboratory and 44 class rooms with suitable provision for accommodating the library, the office, and the manual training classes. The Girls' Sections which formed part of the Boys' High School in the higher forms till the end of the last academic year, were separated in June last. The School consisted of three divisions, the main School, North Branch, and South Branch. The strength in these divisions were 1,330, 425, and 322 respectively. The Branch Schools contained classes up to the Third Form. There was also a Boys' Elementary School of strength 260. The School followed mainly the departmental syllabuses. Tamil and Telugu were the medium of instruction in the lower forms, and in Forms IV and V, two sections in each were taught through the medium of Tamil, while the rest had English. The languages taught in the A group were Tamil, Telugu, and Sanskrit. In the C group the optional subjects were Mathematics, Physics, History, Physiology, Book-keeping, and Chemistry. Music as an alternative to Drawing was continued to be taught in the Branch Schools. Out of 252 pupils that were sent up without any formal selection for the last S.S.L.C. Examination 129 were declared eligible. The School is equipped with a general library of over 6,000 volumes and a class library of 1,500 books, a laboratory for the improvement of which a sum of nearly Rs. 5,000 was spent last year, and a Museum for the General Science and Physiology classes. The Management of the School

lays due emphasis on religious instruction. Regarding physical training and games the School has provided ample number of games and facilities for the former too. As for the concessions, the Management awarded concessions to 165 pupils of Backward Community and to about 167 other poor deserving pupils; only a very few students were in receipt of Government and other scholarships. The pupils entered into various competitions and in some of them came out brilliantly successful. Excursions to various places far and near were also arranged during the year. The Mission's Hostel attached to this school continued to be located in rented buildings and the number of inmates was nearly 50, and this was managed by a Swami, the warden, assisted by two members of the School staff. The total receipts and expenditure for the year of the main High School and the Branches were Rs. 95,876-10-3 and Rs. 87,711-15-5. Against this balance of Rs. 8,164-10-10 there was a commitment of about Rs. 9,000 towards the cost of land purchased for the North Branch School.

In the words of the Chief Adviser to H.E. the Governor of Madras, Mr. G. T. Boag, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., 'the institution is doing work of the greatest value'; because the Home, as another educationist, Principal Pherwani, records in the Visitors' Book, 'has elements of spiritual training, social service, self-help, and manual and industrial training to work towards a harmonious development of the whole human personality. India needs more of such institutions....' And it is no wonder that another distinguished visitor records the wish of all who have watched it: 'The Home is unique and deserves every encouragement and sympathy.'



THE  
VEDANTA KESARI

VOLUME XXVII



NUMBER 12

APRIL, 1941.

---

**LOVE AND HATE**

' . . . I am in love with Love,  
And the sole thing I hate is Hate:  
For Hate is death; and Love is life,  
A peace, a splendour from above;  
And Hate, a never-ending strife,  
A snake, a blackness from the abyss  
Where unclean serpents coil and hiss!  
Love is the Holy Ghost within;  
Hate, the unpardonable sin!  
Who preaches otherwise than this,  
Betrays his master with a kiss!'

**HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW**

## 'THEREFORE FIGHT, ARJUN'

Contributed by Prof. J. B. Pratt, Ph.D., Williams College, Massachusetts, author of important works on religion and the psychology of religion.—Ed.

THE great religions agree on the praise of love. One might almost say that the place of any given religion in the value-scale is largely determined by its estimate of love. The primitive religions make nothing of it; the nationalistic religions preach a limited love and a wide enmity. Hinduism at its best, Buddhism, Judaism, and Christianity teach a universal love that shall dominate all life. From this it has naturally followed that the great religions have thundered against unnecessary slaughter and strife, and have sung the praises of peace: and pacifism has regularly appealed to religion for justification and authority.

In the face of this situation it gives one pause to open the *Bhagavadgita*, Mr. Gandhi's favorite Gospel, and find the words placed at the head of this paper. A similar expression awaits me on opening the Christian Gospels and reading the account of Jesus beating the money-changers and driving them by violence out of the Temple. In view of passages like these it may be well for us to consider briefly the principles at the bottom of religion's attitude toward war.

Religion realizes that war is always an evil and a great evil. But this does not mean, either for religion or for a rationally defensi-

ble ethic, that to fight is always morally wrong. The words *evil* and *good* both have double meanings. They are used in a generic and non-moral sense, and in a specific and moral sense. Many things are evil and many things are good which are not morally either good or evil. Pain, for example is evil or bad, pleasure is good, but neither of them in the moral sense. Nothing is morally either good or bad except a choice. And the goodness or badness of a choice will depend upon the alternatives between which the choice is made. The choice to fight and kill, as a matter of fact, is usually a moral evil, but not necessarily so. Whether it is evil or good will depend upon what is the alternative. If the only alternative to violent resistance be passive non-resistance or helpless and hopeless inefficiency, the permitting of evil to triumph, the slaughter of the defenceless, the overthrow of a noble cause, then to refuse to fight is to choose the lesser good and the greater evil and to act in the way that reason must condemn. It is the great achievement of Mr. Gandhi that he has taught the world how efficiently and successfully one may often resist evil by other than violent means. But when a situation arises in which non-violent resistance will be unsuccessful and one must choose between fighting and allowing evil to triumph, then to resist by violence is not only not sinful, it is a positive duty. 'Therefore fight, Arjun!'

The usual pacifist argument against war is based either upon a non-rational conviction that violence is always intrinsically wrong and the chief wrong, regardless of consequences: or upon a natural shrinking from the painful act of shedding blood. The conviction in question we have considered: the shrinking is natural enough, but as an excuse for not resisting evil by the use of force, when it seems the only hopeful course, is no more admirable than shrinking from a fight because one wishes to save one's skin. In both cases it is an attempt to save one's own feelings: to let the other fellow do the disagreeable work.

This sort of pacifism is really founded on an essentially materialistic view of the values of life. Against such a position Sri Krishna

and the Jesus of the Christian Gospels remind us that there are greater values than saving our skins, worse things than death. And to the man whom the defenceless naturally trust as their defender, to the man who has devoted himself to some noble cause which is threatened by unreasoning violence, the words of the *Gita* come today with moving force:

'Looking on thine own Law thou shouldst not be dismayed; for to a defender of the right there is nothing more blest than a noble strife. Happy those who find such a strife coming unsought to them. . . . Holding in indifference alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, make thyself ready for the fight.'

J. B. PRATT

### **SRI RAMAKRISHNA: THE PROOF OF THE VALIDITY AND VITALITY OF HINDUISM**

The following paper was read on the occasion of the celebration of the hundred-and-seventh Birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna held at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, on March 2, 1941, by **Dr. V. Raghavan, M.A., Ph.D.**, of the Madras University. Mr. S. V. Ramamurti, M.A., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, was in the chair.

For a period of over half a century now, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna has been the subject of numerous studies, some of them by persons pre-eminent among the intellectuals of the world. It will be a pretension on my part if I come forward today with the intention of projecting before you any new aspect of the life and teachings of the saint, or of attempting any original interpretation or presentation. I have looked forward to this occasion not so much as one calling forth the demonstration of one's claim to intellectual or literary gifts, as one testing one's capacity, the rarer endowment, for partaking of a holy spiritual experience, *anubhava*. For such is the character of a contact with, or a recapitulation of, the life, doings, and sayings of a *mahatman*. To those who can revel in things pertaining to the spirit, it matters

not to what extent of the story of the great they are able to dwell upon. For even a little of the merit derived from it saves one from great fear (*Svalpam apy asya punyasya trayate mahato bhayat*). It is in this spirit that I proceed to engage my attention and I hope yours, too, on some aspects of Bhagavan Ramakrishna's life and teachings.

To me Ramakrishna appears as a strong proof of the essential validity and vitality of Hinduism as a whole. The value of this proof becomes greater when we remember that he came in modern times and in the recent past. In the world of art, some strive for renown by inventing a metre or creating a new form. This appears to me as an easier path to fame, and is a temptation to all types of gifted persons. New sects of religion and fresh schools of philosophy arise in this manner. But Ramakrishna's greatness was that he was not out to found a new creed, but only to fulfil, verify, and proclaim the basic and all-embracing fundamentals of Hinduism. 'Is it good to create sects?' he asked, and replied, 'He who looks for fame and honour forms sects.' He said that the difference between modern Brahmoism and Hinduism is the difference between a single note and a whole gamut. He prayed to the Mother not to make him famous by propounding any new *ism*. How could he found one, when he came to us as the Messiah of the unity of all faiths?

Another truth—for which I desire to take further strength and inspiration from Ramakrishna's life—is the help which aesthetic experience and the training it gives for absorption through Beauty offer one in the spiritual path. As far as music is concerned, it is pretty clear that *nadanubhava* leads one very near *brahmanubhava*. Yajnavalkya says:

वीणावादनतत्त्वज्ञः श्रुतिजातिविशारदः ।

तालज्ञश्चाप्रयासेन मोक्षमार्गं नियच्छति ॥

That the poet's art, which also creates patterns in the realm of *namarupa* through *vak*, can be effective as a Yoga is the opinion of the poet and devotee of Devi, Sri Nilakantha Dikshita, who says:

यत्सन्दर्भे यदुक्तेष्वे यत्सङ्गये निभृतं मनः ।

समाचेरपि तन्मयायः शङ्करो यदि वर्ण्यते ॥

अनायतप्राणमसंयताच्चमब्रह्मचर्यानिशनादिस्तेदम् ।

चित्तं मद्देशे निभृतं निभातुं सिद्धः कवीनां कवितैव योगः ॥

Now, what we find from Ramakrishna's life is that two of his early trances were the result of aesthetic absorption. On the first occasion Ramakrishna saw a flight of white cranes appearing at one end of a black cloud rapidly spreading in the sky, and he lost consciousness and fell down; and on the second, while representing Siva in a popular religious drama, when he lost himself in the glory of God.

Through association with Totapuri, the *avadhuta*, Ramakrishna realized the all-glorious Advaitic Brahman. 'One day it was revealed

to me', said Ramakrishna, 'that everything is pure Spirit. The temple vessels, the altar, men, beast,—all Spirit! And like a madman, I began to rain flowers on everything!' He saw the whole world as Rama and felt, 'Whom can I teach?' There were other evidences of his having become Brahman, the All. A blow on a boat-man in sight once left its mark on Ramakrishna's body. As Suka was going, Vyasa, his father, ran out calling to him. As Suka had realized everything in his own self and his own self in everything, the trees replied to Vyasa's call. *Bhagavata*, I: 2.2.

यं प्रव्रजन्तमनुपेतमपेतकृत्यं  
द्वैपायनो विरहकातर आजुहाव ।  
पुन्येति तन्मयतया तरवोऽभिनेदुः  
तं सर्वभूतहृदयं मुनिमानतोऽस्मि ॥

While Totapuri did not wish to come down from the *advaitic* state, Ramakrishna willingly and purposely made the descent, *avatara*, to the level of the Bhakta of the Mother. The Tamil poet asked, 'Those who have become one with the vast void of Chidambara, will they return?' Few indeed would come back; but Ramakrishna considered remaining in that state as selfishly seeking a lonely salvation, without a thought for suffering humanity. When Vivekananda asked for a spell of this *Brahma-sakshatkara*, the Master said, 'I thought you were to be the great banyan tree giving shelter to thousands of tired souls; but you are selfishly seeking your own well-being. . . . How can you be satisfied with so one-sided an ideal?' At another time he said, 'Let me be condemned to be born over and over again. . . if I can be of help to a single soul.' 'I will give up twenty-thousand bodies to help even one man.' Prahlada prayed to Lord Narasimha: 'Without working for the welfare of others, ordinary sages, desirous of their own salvation, practise silence in solitude. But I do not desire to leave the suffering folk and seek deliverance for my single self.'

प्रायेण देव मुनयः स्वविमुक्तिक्तामा  
मौनं चरन्ति विजने न परार्थनिष्ठाः ॥  
नैतान् विहाय कृपणां विमुमुक्षु एको  
नान्यं स्वदस्य शरणं भ्रमतोऽनुपश्ये ॥

*Bhagavata*, VII: 9.4.

It is the *Bhagavata* and its spirit that receive a commentary from Ramakrishna's life. The ideal Advaitin of the *Bhagavata* revels in *Ekabhakti* to a personal God also.

आत्मारामाश्च मुनयो निर्ग्रन्था अप्युत्क्रमे ।  
कुर्वन्त्यहैतुकीं भक्तिमित्थंभूतशुणो हरिः ॥

*Ibid*, I: 7.10

नैष्कर्म्यमप्यच्युतभाववर्जितं  
न शोभते ज्ञानमलं निरञ्जनम् ॥

*Ibid*, XII: 12.52

What is more natural or more helpful to the non-dualistic realization than the adoration of *Maha maya* Herself, the Mother Creator Who throws up this entire myriad-patterned Nature? To the end Ramakrishna held to the state of *advaitic* realization as well as to the state of the devotee, a Jnanin and a Bhakta in one. He said: 'When I think of the Supreme as inactive . . . I call Him Brahman or Purusha, the impersonal God. When I think of Him as active, creating, preserving, destroying, I call Him Sakti, or Maya, or Prakriti, the personal God. But the distinction does not mean a difference. . . . in the same way as milk and its whiteness, or the diamond and its lustre. . . . When he returned from the state of the one supreme undifferentiated Consciousness to the state of a Bhakta again, he began, like an artist, going about enjoying every variety of God-love, not only those known to Hinduism, but also to other faiths like Mohammedanism and Christianity.

Ramakrishna firmly believed in the genius of Hinduism, which is the only religion which recognizes the need for a rich variety of paths. We may recall the Master's comparison of Hinduism to the rich gamut, as contrasted to the single note. And as has been observed again and again, the leading characteristic of his mission on earth as exemplified in his life is the reconciliation and verification of the diverse paths to God. To men in various levels, he ministered differently and suitably. He said that caste, rite, and ceremony are all necessary, just like husk to the grain that grows. To those leading a household life, he said: To a man of knowledge and devotion, the family and the world cannot be a chain. Let us recall the words of the Lord to Priyavrata

जितेन्द्रियस्यात्मरतेर्बुधस्य

गृहाम्रमः किं नु करोत्यवद्यम् ॥

*Bhagavata*, V: 1.17

To lead the householder's life is like fighting from within a fortress; the Sannyasin's life is like a battle in an open field—a more arduous task. 'I do not ask them to renounce all,' he said. His teaching to ordinary man was to maintain social harmony by fulfilling the duties of his position and not to leave home or society with the excuse of a religious call.

We noted above that Ramakrishna valued the descent from the Absolutistic state for the opportunity it afforded in raising and serving suffering humanity. Service to the suffering and disinterested discharge of one's duties were both emphasized by him. He spoke of the path

of Karmayoga also, but added that it was rather difficult, and also of the Janakas who were few and far-between. Service to others, he taught, as a means of realizing the presence of God in all beings. At Deoghar where Ramakrishna saw the Santals starving and destitute, he insisted that Mathur should feed and clothe them all; he exhorted the same person to cancel his tenants' dues. For, what is adoration of an idol, material or mental, worth, if one despises and neglects the God in every living body around him? Let this not be imagined to be a new fancy; it is an authentic call of Hinduism. Harken to the exhortation of Bhagavan Kapila to his mother Devahuti:—'As the immanent soul, I am eternally established in all beings. Disregarding me, thus present, men perform the mockery of idol-worship. He who leaving aside Me present in all beings, resorts to the idol, is but pouring his oblation on ashes, foolishly. Those arrogant persons who hate Me residing in other bodies, and making invidious distinctions, and bearing enmity towards creatures, shall not get peace of mind. O sinless one, I am not gratified by worship offered to me in an Idol, be it with manifold materials, so long as the person who makes such offering insults humanity. . . . He who draws the line between himself and another, him death chases with its danger.

'Therefore, since my temples are the beings in the universe, one should, with affection and a sense of oneness, honour those beings and through them, My own Self, with gifts and acts of respect.'

अहं सर्वेषु भूतेषु भूतात्मावस्थितः सदा ।  
 तमवज्ञाय मां मर्त्यः कुरुतेऽर्चाविडम्बनम् ॥  
 यो मां सर्वेषु भूतेषु सन्तमात्मानमीश्वरम् ।  
 हित्वार्चा भजते मौढ्याद् भस्मन्येव जुहोति सः ॥  
 द्विषतः परकाये मां मानिनो भिन्नदर्शिनः ।  
 भूतेषु बद्धवैरस्य न मनः शान्तिमुच्छति ॥  
 अहमुच्चावचैर्द्रव्यैः क्रिययोत्पन्नयानये ।  
 नैव तुल्येऽर्चितोऽर्चायां भूतप्रामावमानिनः ॥  
 आत्मनश्च परस्यापि यः करोत्यन्तरोदरम् ।  
 तस्य भिन्नदृशो मृत्युर्विदधे भयमुल्बणम् ॥  
 जय मां सर्वभूतेषु भूतात्मानं कृतालयम् ।  
 अर्हयेद्दानमानाभ्यां मैत्र्याभिज्ञेन चक्षुषा ॥

*Bhagavata, III: 21-27 except 25*

Another important feature of Hinduism is the freedom of worship it gives to its votary. It does not use compulsion. Faith, practice, realization, and purity of life all have to be an inward and organic growth in the aspirant, and nothing can be externally or artificially imposed. After pouring out eighteen chapters of teachings, the Lord



tells Arjuna, 'Do as you please (*Yatheccchasi tatha kuru*).' Bhagavan Ramakrishna was a true master when he told one of his disciples: 'If you think you can find God better away from me, then go. My one desire is that you should raise yourself above the misery of the world and enjoy divine beatitude.' For, whatever the path one has taken, what is essential is that one should have faith in it and strive sincerely. Ramakrishna has no quarrel with sects. He said, 'The peculiarities of creeds and sects matter little or nothing. With faith let everyone practise the devotions and perform the duties of his own creed.' It is this basic attitude that explains the sanity of Hinduism among the world's religions and its calm unconcern to add to its number; for it is convinced that it is the religion of religions. Let this again be not mistaken for a newly caught fad; successive generations of sages of Hinduism have proclaimed that the goal of the spiritual quest is one; but the paths are diverse—all leading to the same destination. This harmony comprehends not only the indigenous sects or schools of philosophy but also foreign religions.

The *Sivamahimnahstava* (Verse, 7) says:

त्रयी साङ्ख्यं योगः पशुपतिमतं वैष्णवमिति  
 प्रसिद्धे प्रस्थाने परमिदमदः पथ्यमिति च ।  
 रुचीनां वैचित्र्याद्भुजकुटिलनानापथ्यजुषां  
 नृणामेको गम्यस्त्वमसि पयसामर्णव इव ॥

Akrura says in his hymn to Hari:

सर्वे एव यजन्ति त्वां सर्वदेवमयेश्वरम् ।  
 येऽप्यन्यदेवतामक्ता यद्यप्यन्यधियः प्रभो ॥

*Bhagavata*, X: 40.9

The Lord Himself proclaims that in whatever form He is sought, in that form does He respond to the seeker.

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।

Do we not say thrice every day in our Sandhya prayers: 'Even as all waters from the skies reach but the one same ocean, even so do obeisances made to all gods reach the one God:

आकाशात्पतितं तोयं यथा गच्छति सागरम् ।  
 सर्वदेवनमस्कारः केशवं प्रति गच्छति ॥'

Ramakrishna's spiritual experience exemplified this cardinal doctrine of Hinduism. He not only ratified all our indigenous sects and systems, but, what is more important, realized the same goal through Moham-medanism and Christianity also. He told his disciples: 'I have practised all religions—Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity—and I have followed the paths of the different Hindu sects. . . . I have found that it is the same God towards Whom all are directing their steps, though

along different paths. . . . Wherever I look I see men quarrelling in the name of religion—Hindus, Mohammedans, Brahmos, Vaishnavas, and the rest; but they never reflect that He Who is called Siva bears the names of Primitive Energy, Jesus, and Allah as well; the same Rama with a thousand names. The tank has several ghats. At one place Hindus draw water in pitchers and call it *jala*; at another Mussalmans draw water in leather bags and call it *pani*; at a third Christians, and call it water. Can we imagine that the water is not *jala*, but only *pani* or water? How ridiculous! The substance is one under different names; and everyone is seeking the same substance. . . . Do not argue about doctrines and religions. There is only one Truth. All rivers flow to the ocean. Flow and let others flow too! The great stream carves out for itself, according to the slope of its journey—according to race, time, and temperament—its own distinct bed. But it is all the same water . . . . Go. . . . Flow on towards the ocean!’ Hinduism never lost sight of this, its primary foundation; and therefore, it is more to our brethren of other religions that one might take Ramakrishna as having delivered this great message.

Hear again the precious words of another Paramahansa. His Holiness Sankaracharya of Sringeri was met by an European with his wife and children, in 1926. The latter had studied Vedanta and desired to know if Hinduism took converts. ‘No, rather, it is needless for Hinduism to take converts,’ was His Holiness’ reply. Then followed a most exalting *Samvada* (not *vada*) during which His Holiness explained why Hinduism is called *Sanatanadharmā*, the Eternal Law. Let me read out to you the closing portion of this *Samvada*:

The European: I cannot sufficiently thank you, Swamiji, for your kind words of advice. Please allow me to confess that when I came here, I had no idea that I would be going away from you with a sincere desire to be a better Christian.

His Holiness: An artist, ever so capable, even though provided with the finest of colours and the finest of pencils, and even though he may have thought out the finest of subjects, cannot depict a picture on vacant air. To use and give expression to all these faculties and conceptions, he does require a stable background of canvas. . . . Don’t waste, therefore, your gifts in airy speculations as to the relative value of several religions. Apply your God-given gifts on the stable background of your God-chosen faith, Christianity. When the painting is over and you are contemplating the beauty of the picture, the background may fade away from your view of its own accord. . . .

This is the ancient and eternal voice of the men of realization of Bharatavarsha. May it deeply go home to all those disputants who are making a tragi-comic spectacle of our land.

V. RAGHAVAN

## RELIGIOUS FACTOR IN EDUCATION: SOME THOUGHTS ON INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION

**Dr. V. N. Sharma, B.A., B.T., Ph.D.,** (Heidelberg) was formerly visiting Teacher at St. Christophers, Letchworth, and Frensham Heights, Farnham (England) and Professor at Odencaldschule (Germany) and is at present director of Children's Garden School, Mylapore. What follows is a scholarly appreciation of the outstanding features of the system of education transmitted by ancient Indian teachers.—Ed.

### I

RELIGIOUS atmosphere is the dominant factor in the educational system of ancient India. Religion is never taught, but, as the Indian tradition tells us, it is caught by the young and the old, by living the life of the highest ideal in the company of their teachers (Gurukula). In a restricted sense, the student is provided with this religious atmosphere both at home by their parents and in the school by their teachers, from the time they get up from their beds in the morning till they go to bed at night. The religious atmosphere not only encompasses their thoughts and deeds when they are awake but even during sleep and dream its influence is present in their consciousness.

The youthful seeker after truth and knowledge begins daily life quite early—at times even at 4-30 a.m.—with the traditional, yet living, morning devotions (Sandhyavandana). Through these, he is made to realize that every one of his religious exercises and practices brings him nearer to Life Eternal. He is further taught that he is not alone in his search

after truth. There is an invisible force within and without him, reminding him time after time that he is an atom in this divine force of Life. This divine force in its turn gives illumination and understanding to him and brings out his latent forces. He is taught also, through enchanting Vedic music, that his physical form cannot exist without that super-physical life, that governs every moment, every step of his on the path of life. In one of the invocations that is chanted on this occasion, he is made to meditate on nothing but the truth, for truth is the Life Eternal. Truth is visualized by the devotee in his silent contemplation, in the glorious and enchanting form of the sun. The sun is the soul of everything moving and unmoving. From the sun emanate all beings, visible and invisible; all elements issue forth only from him. So the student prays, 'We offer our salutations unto Thee, O ye the first and foremost of all Gods and men. Thou art the root and source of all forces of life and of all knowledge and activity of our world' (*Taittiriya Sandhyavandana*). The sun pervades everywhere and by him all beings are purified. Therefore, everything we behold around us is pure, holy, and full of beauty; for he is the guiding force in all, directing them all to act as his instruments. Without him none can act or move. The student is made to behold this truth through silent and inner realization, and through his contact with all things animate and inanimate. Hence all are worthy of his adoration,

honour, and respect. By natural instinct, he therefore looks with fraternal eye, not only the inmates of his own family, but even the members of his teachers' and neighbours' families—young and old, men and women, rich and poor. Even the plants and animals, trees and creepers, fruits and flowers, birds and stones, all receive the same adoration from him. For to him Nature is the beloved mother, tender and ever loving, offering young and old whatever they desire; she never rejects the prayer of her beloved children; she is always ready to place her never-ending powers at their disposal. No anger, no terror, no tyranny, finds man in her glorious presence. For, is she not the physical manifestation and incarnation of the dynamic power of Him, the Invisible, Eternal and All-pervading? He who does not understand this eternal mystery in the face of mother Nature, cannot understand Him either in Form or in Not-Form. Therefore, the devotional meditations in the morning, noon, and evening introduce the devotees to the mysteries of mother Nature in all her different aspects. The student is thus enabled to recognize the Divine in all by this instruction; and thus also the devotional meditation, in a sense, is made the first step introducing the student to the central secret of our ancient scheme of education. All arts and sciences of India proclaim that devotion is the foundation of all knowledge, higher and lower. In other words, when one is not perfect in his devotional exercises, he has no right to enter into the kingdom of divine knowledge.

## II

Such a silent and solemn contemplation practised day after day both

in the morning and evening purifies, nourishes, and gives unsurpassed vitality to the pupil both of mind and body. Such meditation has also its deep influence on the emotions and thoughts that are in formation. A student is therefore enjoined to observe daily devotional meditations without any interruption, early in the morning, at midday, and at sunset. 'The evening meditation purifies the mind and body of the preceding day's stains, worries, thoughts of sins, and evils. The morning meditation clears away the vices, astral and physical, of the night before, and gives new strength to meet with equanimity, the trials and troubles of the coming day.'<sup>1</sup> Hence no intellectual and spiritual education is imparted in India to any student unless he is thorough with his daily meditational exercises and practices, as enjoined by the teachers of old. Because it is considered by all ancient authorities that meditation is the practice of the very quintessence of all the sciences and arts, and of all the systems of physical and spiritual culture.

Besides the devotional meditations, there are other requisites in connection with the education of students. Most important among them being, simple dress, plain food, hard bed, and the vow of continence (Brahmacharya). There are no exceptions in this matter; princes and peasants, nobles and commoners, all are treated alike, without any distinction of caste, creed, etc. Leading an ideal life, facing all conditions of life with equanimity, is the most important qualification for the student; whatever he studies, whichever experience

<sup>1</sup>पूर्वा सन्ध्या जपस्तिष्ठन् नैशमेनो व्योदहति ।  
पश्चिमा तु सामासीनो यत्नं हन्ति दिवा कृत्यम् ॥

he gathers, is meant for the whole life; to achieve this alone is he here on this earth. Many of our modern teachers and students will naturally think that such an ideal of life placed before the student, under the Indian system of education, is rather harsh or brutal; but no student of olden days—and as a matter of fact any student who undergoes a real Indian system even today—complained against this path of education laid out by his ancestors. There is no reason for doing so, even if he happens to think the ideal to be hard and rigid; for before him is his teacher, who just like his pupils undergoes the same discipline and presents before them day after day his own highest and noblest ideal of moral life and character. Further, the Indian teacher is not a task-master, or a person whom one will have to fear. He is the mother, father, friend, and companion to the pupils, and his helping hand is there in all spheres of mundane routine so that he can share with his students their joys and pleasures, sorrows and troubles.

### III

Under the Indian system of education a student is known as 'Brahma-chari'—a pilgrim in search of God Immanent (Brahman). He enters studentship so as to become a master over his entire body, physical (Sthula) and emotional and mental (Sukshma). This is a stage in the course of his life, in which he is made, under the ancient discipline, to steer clear of passions and temptations of youth—the passage of his adolescence. 'Give the mind absorbing work and the body plenty of exercise in the open air' is the advice of Manu to all seekers of

knowledge. According to Indian conception all troubles and complications in the life of a young man arise when he is passing through his adolescence, because youths are then attracted by luxuries of life, comfortable beds, pride of personal possessions and belongings. Therefore the Indian system of education advises the student to reject luxuries, such as ornaments, elegant clothes, perfumes, music, flowers, high seats, beds, etc.; for these capture 'the mind through the gateways of the senses' (Manu). As we shall see later, young students are sent out daily for alms in the neighbouring villages after finishing their morning studies; and they carry out physical work of a strenuous and tiresome nature. Our Epics and other classical works contain innumerable instances illustrating how this discipline was carried out to its fullest extent at all times with great success. Moreover the students are trained to regard with a brotherly eye all the tender-eyed maidens of the neighbourhood who bestowed alms and the teacher's wife and other members of his household, during his stay with the teacher, with whom he is always on familiar terms. In this respect an Indian student is quite different from those of other lands in ancient times. In Egypt, the sight of strange girls was avoided by the students; we can also find the same attitude in Babylonia and Assyria. However in India women have been looked on always as mothers, so that the carnal idea was out of place in the mind of the young student. Exceptions, naturally, there were; for, as we see in the Indian educational system under Buddhists and Jains, there prevailed the vice of homosexuality, where young men under

monastic school organizations happened to live in bands. In particular the Buddhist records have severe injunctions against sexual misconduct. Mere talk with a woman was sinful, a wishful look at one was another sin, the very desire to see one was a third (*vide* Vinaya Vols. 13, 18 and 20 S. B. E.).

#### IV

**Bodily Purity:** Bodily purity is considered a preliminary step towards any educational method. A clear conception of the intimate relation existing between the body and the mind, and the activity of the mind in harmony with the spiritual atmosphere, could be possible only if the physical impulses are not allowed to drag them down. This is especially emphasized through different forms of meditation and worship right from the birth of the child, at home and in all spheres of cultural life. The great medical authority of ancient India, Charaka, says: 'Even at the risk of giving up everything else, you should protect your body, for, if your body does not exist, everything that exists is non-existence to you'.<sup>2</sup> The *Atharva Veda* advises its students: 'Keep a sound mind in a safe body. Bodily purity is needed to make the mind express through it.' The innumerable exercises and practices which the Indian system of education adopted served to make the student's body and mind ever pure. The first and the most important method in this connection adopted is the science of breathing (*Pranayama*) taught to every one that came to the teacher. This serves to purify the nervous system to promote

health and to combat diseases: 'The impurities of the sense-organs are removed by *Pranayama* just as metals are tempered and purified by melting them in fire. Physical defects and diseases as well as excitements must be rectified by the control and regulation of breath; mental diseases, excitements and addictions to sense-objects by the practice of mental abstraction; and finally the disturbances of natural impulses of physical life must be overcome by the practice of meditation.<sup>3</sup> Manu further desires in this connection harmony and peace in all movements of the physical organs as well as in the manners and behaviour of the person himself: Let him not move his hands or feet or eyes aimlessly. Let him not talk restlessly and crookedly. Let him not think of outraging others and injuring them enviously.<sup>4</sup> Hence it is said that by understanding properly the science of breathing (*Pranayama*) and its proper application—through regulated exercises etc.—dormant nerves and cells can be reached without any difficulty, and stimulated; and through such a method new powers of vitality can be acquired in a short time. Therefore, regulation of such breathing exercises that help towards physical and mental purity are indispensable items in all plans of education in ancient India.

Further, the tending of the culinary fires and learning the secrets of cooking was another important item of

२ दृष्टान्ते आद्यमानानां वातूनां हि यथा मलाः ।

तथेन्द्रियाणां दृष्टान्ते दोषाः प्राणस्य निग्रहात् ॥

प्राणायामैर्देहेदोषान् धारणाभिश्च किल्बिषान् ।

प्रत्याहारेण संसर्गान् ध्यानेनानीश्वरान्मुखात् ॥

५ न पाणिपादचपलो न नेत्रचपलोऽङ्गुलुः ।

न स्याद्वाक्चपलश्चैव न परीहकर्मवीः ॥

३ सर्वमन्यत् परित्यज्य शरीरमनुपालयेत् ।

तदभावे हि आत्मानां सर्वाभावः शरीरिणाम् ॥

education, which may be regarded as part of physical education, being immediately subservient to good health and vitality (Arogya). The tending of the sacrificial fires, which was later on introduced as an indispensable item in his education, though it has a purely religious character, has the fundamental idea of creating healthy and hygienic conditions in his daily surroundings.

Moreover, there are some special physical exercises that go under the popular Indian name, 'Surya-namaskaram' (Adoration of the Sun), which each and every student is enjoined to practise as a part of his routine programme for his health, efficiency, and longevity (Ayuraro-ya). Performed in the pure open air at the sunrise, these exercises are considered as vital sources of physical and mental strength. In these one exposes his body—almost bare—to the life-giving ultra-violet rays of the rising sun. Moreover, there are many other exercises of similar nature, that are followed by students of all types and of all ages, which strengthen and bring about harmony and restfulness. They purify not only the physical and emotional body in general, but the nervous system specially, which in the opinion of the ancient teachers of India, is the most vital factor in the purity of the mind and the body of the individual. In this connection, there is a particular process, known as 'Nadi Suddhi', nerve purification, which quietens the nervous system so as to give a deliberate calmness to all organs, within and without.

**Right Food:** The need for vital and nourishing food for the growing organism is always kept in view

and no prohibition or ascetic control of food is enforced. Certain classes of food articles are forbidden on account of their physiological and psychological effects; some others on account of their origin and appearance, suggestive of unhealthy ideas. Indian religious books of old, both Hindu and Buddhist, have very strict injunctions in all matters pertaining to the food of a student: 'A clean food makes a clean heart,' says the *Chandogyopanishad*, VII: 26.2. Food is always divine, for it has its source in the Life Eternal; one should, therefore, receive his food with devotion and peace, as one receives his ideal of Godhead with all due honours and respects. 'He should daily adore his food and take it without speaking ill of it,' says Gautama. 'A right and proper food helps to curb animal nature in man' (*Divyavadana*, pp. 420 and 520). To create a mind which is spotless, which could enter into all spheres of understanding and consciousness, without any impediments and a mind which could work up flashes of intuition into an eternal sunshine is the aim and object of all teachers of India in prescribing a right sort of food with all religious injunctions. In this connection there is a prayer at every time, when one sits before his meal. Besides he is enjoined to sit in a right posture facing the east. No discussion or unpleasant words are allowed during his food time. Indian tradition does not in any way cut down either the pupil's rations or make him starve, as one finds in other lands under similar conditions of education with religion as its background. One is allowed, further, to cut down his daily quantity of food, only when he gives up

his probation of life as a student. In this connection, the *Bhagavadgita* puts down in a nutshell, the creed of ancient Indian teachers when it tells us: 'Merely curbing the body and allowing the mind to roam in the pleasures of the senses is a bad discipline. Withdraw the mind from its sense-objects, instead of merely checking the senses' (III: 6). Yet, the *Gita* forbids gluttony, for, 'over-eating stands in the way of success in the practice of silent and solemn meditation' (Sukasaptasati, I: 56). It is considered by all authorities, therefore, that mere cutting down of one's food is not the way of winning control over body and mind. The other important point in this connection is, which kind of food is to be taken, and when and how it is to be taken. On this also there are special rules and instructions. The ideal behind these points are expressed in two ancient terms, viz., Hitam and Mitam. Hitam means that the food taken must be agreeable, and the second term, Mitam, emphasizes that one must take food according to his capacity or necessity.

When we go deeper into the psychology of food, we find that it is divided into three classes: Sattvika, Rajasika and Tamasika. Sattvika food has the power of bringing about peace and harmony in all spheres of one's existence. Rajasika excites passions and creates disharmony, whereas Tamasika food makes one lazy, inactive and violent in his animal passions. Hence, the second and third divisions are considered unsuitable for those who desire to lead a life of studentship; moreover they are not desirable for all those who seek inner peace and happiness. The ancient Indian medical authority, for instance,

Charaka, lays special stress on Sattvika foods. Further he enjoins on all to take such things that give harmony in the system and thus lead to perfect health. According to the *Bhagavadgita* the Sattvika foods prepare a right atmosphere around those who engage themselves in silent contemplation and meditation, and thus keep their minds from wandering away to those things that disturb their inner peace. The Upanishads go a step further and enjoin on all moderation in eating. 'If the food be pure, the mind will be pure; if the mind be pure, then emanate undisturbed and continuous meditation' (*Chandogyopanishad*, VII: 26.2). 'No impure food is to be taken, no impure thing be accepted' (*Brihad-aranyakopanishad*, VIII: 1.14). In some cases the ancient teachers prescribe fasting as a process of physical and mental purification for all those who desire steady meditation. As we see in some of the old records, some students fasted seven days, some a fortnight, and some for a month; for fasting was considered a favourable instrument to mental illumination. Magasthenes observed this habit throughout the land when he visited India (Magasthenes, *Fragment*, 41).

## VI

*Early to rise:* The other important thing that is emphasized time after time is to rise early in the morning. This is a very common practice enjoined in all ancient Indian institutions, and in many cases we see students rise quite early, even before it is light. Kalidasa describes in his famous literary work *Raghuvamsa*, the habit of students getting up in the small hours of the morning. King



Dilipa was awakened in the early morning by the Vedic chant of the young students in the well-known hermitage (Asrama) of his revered teacher. For early hours of the morning were considered best for meditation and studies and the same poet tells us that it was a delight 'to the mind in the last hours of the night' (Kalidasa, *Raghuvamsa*, XVII: 1). It is considered that a student should begin his daily routine of work with innate peace and harmony and without that there would be no orderliness in his life. *Samvarta Samhita*, I: 6, says in this connection: 'The student should perform his meditation early in the morning when the stars are still visible.' In the Buddhist Jataka stories we find many instances, where one sees how this discipline is kept up to the letter. In some of the stories we hear of a school in Benares which possessed a cock that crowed betimes and roused the students to their studies (*Jataka Stories*, I: 436). When this trained cock died, a second cock was obtained, which had been brought up in a cemetery, and had thus no knowledge of times and seasons and used to crow casually at midnight. The young students fell to their studies and meditations so that by dawn they were tired out and could not for sleepiness keep their attention on the subject already learnt; and when they heard a crowing in broad day they did not get a chance of quiet for repeating their lessons. And as it was the cock's crowing at midnight and by day which had brought their studies and meditations to a standstill, they took the bird and wrung its neck (*Jataka Stories*, I: 436). Even today, this ancient system of early rising is in vogue,

and in all schools and colleges that maintain this time-honoured tradition, Vedic studies and meditational exercises are done right in the early morning hours.

## VII

*Bath:* The other preliminary step in the educational system of India is bath. To relieve nervous tension in a tropical climate and to obtain physical purity a student is always enjoined to take regular bath twice or thrice a day. Moreover such daily bath is a religious injunction and forms an indispensable part of his daily routine. The Dharma-sutras speak a good deal in this connection; they contain many a description as to how, when, and where one ought to take his bath. Many hymns (Mantras) are connected with the routine of bathing which tell us how visible waters are compared with the universal stream of Life Eternal. Mother Ganga and Sarasvati play a prominent part in this connection; and they remind one how the universal knowledge flows in different forms and ways through these mothers of Eternal Life. Every one is expected to chant these hymns, and thus make spiritual communion with all the powers of life-giving streams. One might bathe in a mountain ravine or in a pond right on the country side, nevertheless he beholds in them the all-loving Mother Ganga, or the winding Jamuna, or the confluence of the seven streams familiar to him from times immemorial.

## VIII

*Dress:* Even for dress there are special rules and regulations. 'The students of the three social orders shall respectively wear hempen,

silken, and woollen clothes' (*Manu*, II: 41). 'A twice-born one should put on an excellent white piece of cotton or silk cloth without any holes, but quite different from the one used before' (*Usanassamhita*, I: 7). 'The cloth must be white and spotless for a Brahmana, that of a Kshatriya dyed with madder; that of a Vaisya dyed with turmeric or made of raw silk. The undyed cotton cloth is for all religious students' (*Vasishtha Samhita* X). There is more or less a uniform dress to all students: an upper garment, either made of skin or cotton, hung from the left shoulder, wound about the body and tucked under the right shoulder. This form of uniform is known as 'Upavita' mode, and students use this mode when they are engaged in religious ceremonies and rites, as well as in study and meditation. There is another mode, which is known as 'Sanvita' allowing the cloth to hang down on both sides from the neck and is used when busy at outdoor life. The third mode, 'Prachinavita' is adopted when one is engaged in religious sacrifices connected with ancestors (*Pitrisradha*). Moreover there is a girdle, made of grass worn on dress, and a sacred thread (*Yajnopavita*) on the body. Besides these a student is vested with a staff (*Danda*)—a symbol to remind him of his ideal of leading his life of holiness and purity. Either he shaves his head completely or grows a small tuft of hair. 'The shaving of the head, except the tuft of hair on the crown, should be done by a student' (*Katyayanasmhita*, XXV: 15). In some cases he is allowed to grow matted locks (*Vishnusamhita*, XXVIII: 41; *Vasishtha*, VIII). However, we do not find any hard and

fast rules in this connection, for a good deal of freedom is given to follow their own modes of dress so as to suit their own surroundings and traditions.

### IX

*Vow of Continence (Brahmacharya)*: During one's studentship one is enjoined to practise the vow of continence (*Brahmacharya*), whether he happens to study at home or in the house of a teacher (*Gurukula*) 'Till one completes his studies, one should follow complete vow of continence' (*Bodhayanasamhita*, I: 2). 'He should avoid sleep on a cot, or ornamentation of his body, or the use of shoes and umbrella' *Vasishthasamhita*, VII: 14-15). In this connection one is advised to put a great restraint on his sexual impulses. Herein are the traditions of India; and the Aryan tradition is especially very strong and firm as compared with the traditions of the non-Aryans, the Dasyus, who were laughed at as 'Sisnadevah' (*Rigveda*, VIII: 2.1), an expression which is interpreted as men of loose sexual habits. It is said in the Vedic texts that the Aryans were able to vanquish the combined army of their enemies by their vow of continence and by *Tapas*, the stability of character resulting from the curbing of their sexual impulses. (Cf. *Taittiriya Aranyaka*, II: 1). The teacher *Manu* advises in this connection his progeny: 'Let him sleep always alone and let him not cast his seed by any unusual means. A lustful casting of one's seed kills one's own vow of continence' (*Manu, Dharmasastra*, II: 180).

The vow of continence by a seeker of knowledge is regarded as a religious

observance to be followed every day and all day long. All the ancient religious texts, both Grihya and Srauta Sutras, are very strict on this point. The same injunction, we see carried on by the later Buddhist and Hindu schools of education. King Asoka, the great patron of Buddhist tradition, lays a great emphasis on silent contemplation and meditation, and as a preliminary requisite towards that, advises all to follow strictly the vow of continence or self-control (Pativeccha). So also Jain records mention very often of this, and enjoin students to study and meditate with the vow of continence (*Jaininisutras*, XVI). In other words the vow of continence is considered as the foremost discipline of personal life in all systems of ancient Indian education. All texts of old agree that the vow of continence is more important than mere study and learning; for, the latter delude men and make them live in the midst of ignorance (*Kathopanishad*, I: 2-5). Moreover they tell us that the nature of 'that knowledge of the Self, the Highest, which all can either consciously or unconsciously seek, is not to be gained by argument, but it is easy of understanding only to those who lead a life of utter continence and purity as "Brahmacharins" (seekers after the Highest Self).' In the Epics it is said that God Agni granted the celestial Gaya power to know without study, simply because he won the grace of the teachers as a result of his austerity, Tapas), chastity (Sila), and observance of vows of continence (Brahmacharya), (*Mahabharata*, 'Adi Parva', 66). It is said by all wise men of ancient times, as well as by those who carry ancient light of realization today, that continence

(Brahmacharya) alone could produce harmony, an eternal harmony of peace and bliss in one's physical being (Sthula) as well as in one's emotional and mental spheres (Sukshma), and in all higher spheres beyond the latter (Karana); for, the dynamic power of continence is ever increasing through the forces of Pranayama, Sandhya, and nerve purification—through breathing exercises and scrupulous purity.

In this connection one has neither to curb nor to suppress one's natural emotions and streams of thought. For the individual enters into this world as a pure being; but the surroundings of his home and neighbourhood put a veil on his real and true nature. Many habits and associations are formed round different spheres of his consciousness, and they hinder his divine forces; hence what we call either his emotions or his impulses are temporary, they do not emanate from his real nature. It is the duty of the teacher, who first of all knows the real nature of the student to direct all his fleeting emotions into its own sources, i.e., to his higher nature, so that they could take a new form and thus act in him as creative forces. In this connection, the most important means a teacher uses is Brahmacharya—the vows of continence and physical purity through the practices of meditation and austerity. It is said that by this ancient method alone one could make the individual transcend all his passing scenes of life. All teachers of old are of opinion that nothing but this could win the true nature of oneself once again. They who know the mystery of life say that nothing is changed and everything remains in its true and real place, but their

manifestation takes now a new form and shape leading the seeker, not as his enemies, but as his co-workers and friends, to whichever path he might choose for his self-realization (Aurobindo Ghose, *National Education* VI). This is a weapon, therefore, used by all, not as a physical one so as to shed one's own blood and bring about confusion in his life, but as a spiritual weapon, a weapon of truth, to fasten oneself to the goal of eternal life. This method alone, it is further said, would bring real harmony and peace within and without the life of the student. Hence a perfect picture of spiritual life is placed before a student from early morning till evening, from evening till next morning. His life is made always simple, pure, and natural; he follows the traditional habits in his food, rest, and recreation. The rules of personal conduct in this connection are not strange or dreadful to him, for they are ingrained in his veins—one can say in the veins of his race, and he is now carrying them on in personal life as a representative of his race and of his time's immemorial traditions. However he is not alone in this path of continence and purity, because there is before him his teacher with his personal example as well as with his precept, throughout his studentship. Moreover there are the natural surroundings of his home and school (Gurukula) which time after time gives a new impetus of strength with their music of peace and harmony. All possible scope, therefore, one finds in this stage of studentship, as no mercenary considerations interfere with his desire to realize his own true goal in this life.

Further, courtesy in manners, softness in speech, perseverance in activity, and authority to instruct others, form part and parcel of his Brahmacharya. He is a student who is always ready to learn from all and honour them all according to their rank and stage of evolution. Such a Brahmacharin, seeker after higher knowledge, regards all who are older than himself in body and in knowledge as his elder brothers; all who are of the same age or same attainments in knowledge or evolution as his brothers and friends, and they too can as such demand from him all respect due to their rank. All who are younger in age or in evolution are his younger brothers by right and expect affection and companionship from him. Courtesy in manners therefore is a matter of birth and nature in an Indian student even though he is influenced by other tradition foreign to his and pulled down from his natural traditions. Indian education as such cannot be thought of without this as its background. As the Indian tradition teaches him, his education and his learning is of no value in this life without this traditional courtesy. Hence there is no necessity of learning his manners as an educational item, for his parents are his educators right from his birth with their personal example of courtesy. It is said that one's own manners and speech alone entitle one to the rank of honour and respect in society; and therefore these are held before one as greater and more enduring than the passing riches and honours of the mundane world.

In all books of Yoga, which form part of his studies and meditations, these take a most important place.

It is his Yama and Niyama, his natural order and duty, to be courteous towards all beings, and without practising them he is told that he could not progress further in meditation. Hence, Brahmacharya, the *summa magnum* of all peace and purity, is vast and unlimited; and all practices and exercises which bring about peace and perfection in men through the purity of body, emotion, and mind—through courtesy in manners and tenderness in speech—automatically touch it.

### X

*Meditation:* Along with the vow of continence and purity goes *hand in hand* his daily meditation and silent contemplation (Dhyana). It is a part of his daily life, and he is introduced to the realm of contemplation step by step, right from his birth. There is neither standardization nor anything of mass control. The meditation as one learns in India from times immemorial is deep, endless, and fathomless; and everyone can behold its secrets and mysteries, adjusting time and speed according to his innate capacities. As it is said very often, a desire for this arises in a child when it is born. The mother becomes its teacher and initiates it into its mysteries, naturally through her unique method, which is typically Indian. The story of Prahlada, and the life of Baby Krishna, one can take as typical examples of how the mothers become initiators and thus lead their children into those highest regions of understanding, unknowable either by the senses or by the thought. Thus the child begins its meditation by learning to recite invocations, a good many of which are to be found in

Indian texts. The youngsters sing in silence devotional songs. Further they watch the daily work at the house altar done by their parents and take an active part in all religious and devotional ceremonies and rites done either at home or in the neighbourhood. This is the way they catch meditations. Later on, when the boy enters the home of his teacher, he enters another phase of his life. He is now led into a deeper life and his meditation becomes a regular and conscious routine of his life. 'Meditation,' as one ancient teacher tells us, 'steps into his daily life, to bring about perfection and harmony needed to discharge one's own divine duty' (Cf. *Bodhayanasamhita*, 18).

An unbroken meditation is demanded of the pupil now, and it is said that this is not possible unless he follows the daily acts of life: viz., ceremonial bath, regulation of breathing (Pranayama), physical purity by right food and dress, and the vow of continence. In this connection he is given a Mantra, a word or passage that could bring home to him some idea of the Divine manifestation as a subject to be meditated upon. Its main work is to arouse in him and inculcate a craving for Divine knowledge; and there ends its duty. All the rest is in the hands of the seeker; he is a pilgrim treading the ancient and at the same time eternal path. Hence his field is vast and unlimited and he is, therefore, to adjust his steps according to his capacity. There are many exercises and postures which he has to learn; they give him freedom of movement in his contemplation. In other words, everything enables him to remember his innate forces and hold before him his own life's goal,

the Lord of all lords. He has no other purpose in this than to secure union with Him who is within himself alone. Through this discipline of meditation he withdraws his senses from the objects of senses, as a tortoise withdraws its own limbs from the outside world. Through it his understanding becomes well poised. Having restrained all senses from their objects, he sits harmonized, taking God as his supreme goal. For the sake of Him he masters all his senses. His understanding is set on perfect poise. It is said that such a path is even greater than learning attained through thought-power. 'The earth abides as if in meditation; the sky abides as if in meditation; the heaven abides as if in meditation; even gods and men abide as if in meditation. Therefore those who attain greatness among men become as it were partakers of meditation. So do thou adore meditation' (*Chandogyopanishad*, VII: 6). The reward of meditations, if it is allowed to call it a reward, is that the moment he attains the region of meditations, he becomes able to perform whatever he likes (*Ibid.*). However the meditation is not the end but only a process to further processes that teach us of His reflection, of His knowledge. One leads to the other step, bringing the seeker nearer and nearer to his original and true home of life (Paramapada).

There are special instructions, as regards preliminary requisites in this connection. 'It should be done at a level place free from pebbles, fire, and gravel, pleasant to the mind by its sounds, water, and bowers. It should be such a place as to conduce to concentration of mind—not painful to the eye. It may be a cave, or a place

protected from the wind' (*Svetasvatropanishad*, II: 10). There is a special posture in this connection. He is asked to choose a firm seat made of wood, covered with a cloth, deer skin, and Kusa grass (Cf. *Bhagavadgita*, VI: 11). He must hold the body in such a way that the three parts, breast, neck and head, may be erect and straight. He has to perform his meditation constantly observing silence, turning his face towards the sun, uttering auspicious hymns. Besides there are different Asanas and Mudras, different postures and poses, so as to deliver the body from the ravages of idleness and old age, and thus even to retard death. They keep the body and mind active and supple. Further they preserve them from injury, from fire, and from water. One could temper one's body—to use the ancient expression—to the condition of steel and establish a perfect control over it.

## XI

*Conclusion:* Perfection of body and mind is the aim and object of meditation. Thus accuracy and sensitiveness are developed in all spheres of the personality. An unobstructed activity of nervous system is made possible through the purification of the nerves by the regulation of breathing. This process quietens the whole organism, gives a deliberate calmness to the internal organs, and prepares a background for the purification of the mind. Now when a student is ripe enough for advanced steps, then he is introduced into the eight-fold Yoga. Thus it is a life-long process and his path of realization is embodied therein. He is never allowed to proceed on his steps unaided; his teacher ever guides him.

When he needs no more a physical teacher, then steps in his real Teacher, Teacher of all teachers, who is within him alone. Thus a new and a natural consciousness emanates out of this process. He wants now an outlet; he feels now that he is not alone, for he shares the universal peace and happiness within and without. He longs to share this peace of his with all others whom he happens to meet on his way. Thus, according to the Upanishads he becomes a real student, a real Brahman taking good and evil with serenity and with the mind one-pointed. He is wide awake as a clever driver that leads a carriage yoked to a vicious horse. He is, thus, a disciplined one moving among sense-objects with senses free from attraction and repulsion, mastered by the Self; he alone could go to peace and bliss, where the extinction of all pains arises for him (Cf. *Bhagavad-gita*).

Thus all processes of education are directed in India from times immemorial towards attaining knowledge of

the Self—beholding the Divine in all. No mortification or other abnormalities, either of the body or of the mind, are encouraged in this enquiry (Vicara) and pilgrimage of his eternal search. All spheres of education in India pave the way for this search. 'Real silence is knowledge of the Self that is beyond the reach of activity, speech, and thought' (*Aparokshanubhuti*). 'With his body and soul he adores Him, for he looks 'equally on a scholar adorned with learning and humanity, a cow, an elephant, and even a dog and an out-caste' (*Bhagavadgita*, V: 18).

Such is the ultimate object of Indian education, and all forces of nature, visible and divine, are brought into play towards the realization of this goal from times immemorial. All spheres of Indian thought have contributed towards its enrichment. The Vedic Aryans, the Buddhists and the Jains, and later on the Hindus and Mussalmans, have their lion's share in this great mission.

V. N. SHARMA

## THE BOOK OF BOOKS OF TAMIL-LAND—II<sup>1</sup>

IN ancient times society centred round the king, who as the *princeps* took the first place among his nobles and presided over the courts of justice. The executive functions relating to the administration of the country were in the hands of ministers who were personally responsible to the sovereign. The framing of laws was done by the five great assemblies whose enactments were subject to the approval of the supreme head of the

State. There were various ways in which the people and the ministers could signify their discontent and disapproval of the king's actions, but all power was vested in the sovereign's hands and consequently arose the necessity for giving the proper kind of training to the person who is expected to succeed to the throne. All measures had to be taken to ensure his becoming a man of superior excellence. The teacher's

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* note prefixed to the article bearing the same title on page 203, October number of *The Vedanta Kesari*. This article concludes the writer's Introduction to *Kural*.—Ed.

oral instruction, his personality and conduct had a great deal to do with the mental and moral training of the prince; and at the same time a suitable text-book was also considered necessary. Such a book, by its very nature, should be practical and concise giving the necessary information precisely and unerringly. It should be sufficiently terse to be committed to memory and sufficiently elaborate to provide the solution for all practical problems of life.

Tolkappiyanar's treatise on Rhetoric contains a chapter dealing with the king's conduct in war and peace and incidentally has something to say about the codes of conduct of others. It was primarily intended for the use of the bards and minstrels who sang the glories of the king. The information conveyed was, however, scanty and insufficient for practical purposes. According to traditional accounts Tolkappiyanar was the first among the twelve disciples of the sage Agastya who led the first band of Aryan settlers to Tamil-land. His treatise on Tamil Grammar and Rhetoric has been preserved throughout the centuries and modern scholarship has not utilized the treasures lying hidden in it. The second chapter of the third book throws a great deal of light upon the social and civic life of ancient Tamil people. Under the head of "Conquest" (*vakai*), Tolkappiyanar treats of the supreme ethical ideal of his times. He defines "Conquest" as the attaining of excellence naturally and non-violently in the particular vocation to which one is called by birth and other circumstances. The commentator Nachinarkiniyar cites the case of Hiranyakasipu, the Titan who achieved world-domination as an example of no-

conquest, for the achievement was based on undue effort and brute-force and consequently gained no recognition from righteous men. Annexing another's territory by aggressive warfare is classed under the head of "aggression" (*vanchi*). The Chera king Senguttuvan's leading an expedition northwards and subduing several Aryan kings merely for the purpose of exhibiting the military prowess of the South is classed under this head. He who aspires to wear the *Vakai* garland, that is to gain the laurels of true "Conquest" should be acclaimed by righteous men as worthy of such recognition.

It is indeed remarkable to see that in the ancient Tamil society as it existed perhaps four or five millenniums ago the ideal of "Conquest" was held up as the supreme ethical ideal for all classes of people. Buddhism when it was introduced into the South rapidly spread because the Buddha was held up as the "Great Conqueror". Alexander the Great and Napoleon Bonaparte would have been classed by ancient Tamil people as mere "aggressors" and not conquerors. After defining "Conquest," Tolkappiyanar proceeds to enumerate the classes into which the society of his time was divided and the duties in life which they were expected to perform. First there were the Brahmans, referred to in Tamil as Parppanar. Their duties were six-fold: learning, the imparting of education, the performance of Vedic sacrifices, getting others to perform them, making gifts and accepting gifts. Conquest for the Brahman consisted in attaining excellence in one or more of the above six. To the second category belonged the ruling monarchs. Their duties



were five-fold: learning, performing Vedic sacrifices such as the Rajasuya and Aswamedha, making gifts, protecting the people and punishing wrong-doers. The last mentioned duty may be directed towards unrighteous kings of other countries, in which case it was the duty of the conqueror to protect the people of the conquered territories. To the third category belonged the people, the general public, the fourth were the Ariyars (Sages) who could discern the past, the present and the future. The commentator gives the Buddha as an example and quotes an ancient poem which may be translated as follows:

Under the shade afforded by the  
unfading emerald leaves of the  
Bodhi tree he sat;

They say that his great heart was  
softer than a soft flower and shed  
the honey of compassion on one  
and all;

Yet we learn that the piercing  
sword-like glances of Mara's  
handsome daughters were power-  
less to cut through that heart;

How may it then be considered to  
be softer than a soft flower?

To the fifth category belonged the men who performed austerities; the soldiers constituted the sixth and other combatants the seventh. Under other combatants the commentators include all those who contested for the first place in oratory, dancing, music, composing poems *extempore*, various games of skill, cock-fighting, ram-fighting and also gambling.

The special and general excellences of the above seven classes are grouped by Tolkappiyanar under twice nine categories. It is outside the scope of this brief essay to deal with them exhaustively. It would suffice

for our present purpose to state that the commentators quote freely from several chapters of the later work Tiruvalluvar's Kural to exemplify the principles laid down by Tolkappiyanar.

The supreme ethical ideal, as well as the principles of social life laid down by the ancient work of Tolkappiyanar are elaborated by Tiruvalluvar which is primarily a handbook for the Prince, the ideal man of ancient Tamil society. Retiring into solitude for treading the path of self-realization is considered to be the crowning phase of a good life. Harmonious social organization is laid down as a factor necessary for individual right living. The pursuit of truth and the application of truth for the enrichment and elevation of human life are emphasized in Tiruvalluvar's philosophy. Beauty, harmony, knowledge, wisdom and creative power are placed among the values that make life worth living. Self-discipline is considered to be the means for the achievement of these values.

Of the 133 chapters into which the *Kural* is divided the first four form the Introduction; the caption of these four are: (1) In praise of God, (2) In praise of rain, (3) On the greatness of those who have renounced the world, and (4) On the glorification of Righteousness (Tamil Aram, Sanskrit Dharma). Then follows the book on Righteousness. This is divided into two sections; the life of the householder and the life of the ascetic. The life of the householder, consisting of twenty chapters, treats of family life, the blessings of a good helpmate, offspring, love, hospitality, kindness of speech, gratitude, uprightness of heart, self-control, purity of

conduct, non-desiring of another man's wife, forgiveness, non-envying, non-coveting, refraining from slander and idle talk, shunning evil, complaisance, the making of gifts and the acquiring of fame. Under the life of the ascetic, Tiruvalluvar lays down the discipline of compassion, the abjuring of flesh-meat, the practice of truth and abstaining from anger, fraud and all kinds of injury to living beings. Such a discipline is meant to lead to the acquisition of wisdom which is treated under the heads, "The vanity of all things, Renunciation, Self-realization and the Cessation of all desires." Then follows a chapter on "Destiny".

The second book, which treats of national and civic life, is divided into three sections entitled (i) The Prince, (ii) The members of the Body Politic and (iii) Miscellaneous. Section one, which is primarily intended for the prince and incidentally for all who strive to attain their highest in national and civic life is divided into twenty-five chapters and lays down the fundamental principles that should govern the education of the prince. These are treated under the following heads: the ideal of kingship, the worth of true learning, the evils of illiteracy, the acquisition of knowledge by means of listening, the cultivation of the understanding, eschewing faults of character with a view to the cultivation of desirable habits, seeking the society of worthy people, keeping away from vulgar company, deliberating before acting, judging one's own strength and that of one's opponent, judging the opportune time, judging the field of action, testing the men on whom confidence is to be placed, choosing the men for action, cherishing of kindred, guarding against procrastination, just govern-

ment, tyranny, abstaining from extreme harshness, practising considerateness, making use of spies, putting the whole soul into the work in hand, abstaining from sloth, cultivating manly exertion, intrepidity in the face of misfortune.

The first sub-division of section two consisting of ten chapters treats of the qualifications necessary for ministers and ambassadors. These are treated under the heads: the minister, his eloquence, purity of action, power of decision, capacity for conducting affairs, the ambassador, his behaviour before princes, his capacity to judge men, his discernment of the attitude of an assembly, and his self-confidence in facing an audience. Then follows a chapter on the characteristics of a well-ordered country, another on fortifications and a third on the acquisition of wealth. Then follow two chapters on the characteristics of a well-ordered army and the virtues of a warrior. These are followed by five chapters on friendship treated under the heads: friendship, the testing of fitness for friendship, intimacy, the friendship that injures, and false friendship. Next come eleven chapters on the social evils arising from folly, excessive anger and lust and a chapter on the laws of health. Section three speaks of various factors that go to form a well-ordered civic life and these are treated under the heads: birth, honour, greatness, social graces, culture, the mishandling of wealth, sensitiveness to shame, advancing the interests of one's people, husbandry, indigence, beggary, the dread of beggary, the degraded life. The second book which treats of national and civic life contains on the whole seventy chapters. The third book

which treats of love contains twenty-five chapters of which seven treat of courtship and eighteen of wedded love. The philosophy of life in its individual and social aspects is dealt with such fulness and precision by the sage Tiruvalluvar that his immortal work

has been a guide-book throughout the centuries not only to the men and women speaking his mother-tongue but to nations who live far outside the limits of Tamil-land.

SWAMI VIPULANANDA

## AVIDYA AND ADHYASA

In the Advaitic system of philosophy the non-duality of the Ultimate Reality, as against the phenomenal multiplicity based on a subject-object relation, is finally established with the help of the concept of Avidya. It is in the exordium of the *Sariraka-bhashya* of Sri Sankara that Adhyasa is first conceived of to explain all empirical usage. It has been of late vehemently argued at the face of traditional interpretation, with an array of textual facts, that Avidya and Adhyasa are identical. In the following paragraphs **Brahmachari Bhakti Chaitanya** attempts to show that while viewed as cause and effect they are different, qualitatively they are identical.—Ed.

THE nature of the Unreal is one of the most perplexing problems in Indian philosophy. Few problems are more clearly understood in Advaita-Vedanta than the subtle distinction between Nescience (Avidya) and Super-imposition (Adhyasa). Those who are not professional philosophers are willing to admit that they do not know the actual difference between Nescience and Superimposition; but they are convinced of the fact that there is some relation between the two, that both are equally responsible for our wrong knowledge in all its forms,—not to distinguish

between the Real and the Unreal. The final question whether the Unreal is real or unreal is left an open one; for, the reality of the Unreal can be predicated only in a relative sense. An attempt is made in the following paragraphs to determine the actual distinction between the two terms, Nescience and Superimposition, and to see whether the latter precedes the former or follows it.

What in Sri Sankara's opinion the Mayavada means, is shortly as follows: This phenomenal world consisting of sentient and non-sentient objects and distinguished by names and forms owes its illusory appearance to Nescience (Maya or Avidya), the principle of illusion which is associated with Brahman. Nescience cannot be defined as 'being' (Sat), for Brahman is the only 'being'; neither can it be called 'not-being' (Asat), for it is the cause of the appearance of the world. The world of our experience is false in so far as it may be sublated by the cognition of Brahman. Brahman which is of an absolutely homogeneous nature, is hidden owing to the beginningless Nescience. The non-enlightened soul, instead of realizing its own nature as Brahman, identifies itself with limiting adjuncts (Upadhis) and sees diversity within itself. The following texts declare

how the absolute highest Brahman seems to hide its true nature,—

‘By the Untrue they are hidden; of them which are true the Untrue is the covering’ (*Chandogyanishad*, 8, 31);

‘Know Maya to be Prakriti, and the great Lord him who is associated with Maya’ (*Svetasvatara Upanishad*, 4, 10);

‘Indra appears manifold through the Mayas’ (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, 2, 15, 19).

When the non-enlightened soul realizes that there is no difference between his Self and the highest Brahman, the Nescience comes to end then and there.

What, then, is the process of Nescience? How the fictitious distinctions of knowing subject, object of knowledge, and act of knowledge come into being, though Brahman is absolutely non-differentiated non-changing consciousness. Sankara, in his masterly introduction to the Vedanta-Sutras, known as *Adhyasa-Bhashya*, makes it clear that our wrong knowledge has its cause in confounding the Unreal with the Real. He complains of the popular attitude of mixing the ‘object’ with the ‘subject’ and their attributes which are diametrically opposed to each other like darkness and light. The object which is the non-self is superimposed on the subject which is the Universal Self and *vice versa*. It is just like our imagining the snake in a rope owing to some defect; the snake which has for its substrate some object having some resemblance of a serpent is Unreal. In the same way the entire world with all its manifold distinctions is wrongly imagined in the highest Self which is nothing but non-differenced intelligence.

The following are some of the definitions of superimposition as made by Sri Sankara:

(A) ‘The apparent presentation, in the form of remembrance, to consciousness of something previously observed, in some other thing’ (*Adhyasa-Bhashya*).

(B) ‘But all these definitions agree in so far as the present superimposition as the apparent presentation of the attributes of one thing in another thing’ (*Adhyasa-Bhashya*).

(C) ‘This superimposition, thus defined, learned men consider it to be Avidya’ (*Adhyasa-Bhashya*).

(D) ‘The Union between Kshetra and Kshetrajna, between the object and the subject, which are opposed to each other in nature is of mutual Adhyasa; i.e., it consists in confounding them as well as their attributes with each other owing to the absence of discrimination between the nature of Kshetra and Kshetrajna’ (*Gita-Bhashya*, 13.26).

From the passage (A) it is clear that the perceiver who has seen the ‘snake’ elsewhere, imagines it in a rope; the snake is merely imagined though it is not in contact with his senses. The image presented to his consciousness is only *apparent*, as mere resemblance operates. From the passage (B) we understand that the *attribute* of a thing previously observed presents itself to the consciousness in an *apparent* manner, whatever might have been the nature of the superimposition. In the passage (C) superimposition is identified with Nescience in accordance with the opinion of learned men. From the passage (D) we can deduce that the apparent identity between the ‘subject’ and the ‘object’ must be

unreal as they are absolutely opposed to each other in nature.

But, a point is raised—how can a mere act of superimposition cause the non-perception and wrong-perception of truth? If it could, in accordance with the purport of passage (C), we can easily identify 'superimposition' with what is known as 'Nescience'. Let us study, for example, the cognitional activity that takes place in an act of superimposition. A person enters into a dark room and is startled all of a sudden by perceiving an object which is of a coiled shape. He is unable to distinguish the real object that is before him and doubts; finally he jumps to the conclusion that it must be a snake owing to, perhaps, the apparent similarity of the serpentine shape. Of course, the whole process may take place in less than a second, and the perceiver will recede or advance according to the sensation. If the perceiver had seen the rope as a rope, he would not have wrongly perceived anything at all. The whole series of errors clings, as it were, to the non-perception of the real object. Hence, in a way it may be granted that the seed of error rests in the non-perception of truth, which seems to be the first cause of superimposition. In the same way owing to some imperfection the person under ignorance cannot cognize the essential unity of his Self with Brahman; hence the unreal objects are imposed in the highest self which is the only reality. To an advocate of the superimposition-theory, the phenomenon of superimposition simply exists without any cause, as it is quite natural for a person to confuse the truth with the untruth. The superimposition comes to end through the cognition of truth. Hence

he does not believe in the necessity of any primordial Nescience which may itself cause the act of superimposition.

If we have to understand the meaning of Nescience in the light of Sri Sankara's interpretation, it is absolutely necessary for us to subject the above assertion to the texts of scriptural statements as well as reason. Now, a *prima facie* view is raised—why non-perception of truth, which seems to be the cause of subsequent errors, should take place in the mind of the perceiver? One may perhaps reply that it is due to some inherent imperfection; why then, we rejoin, there should be any inherent imperfection at all which makes us err? Has Sri Sankara predicated anywhere the beginningless primordial Nescience which is the cause of all errors, beginning with the non-perception of truth and ending with the mutual superimposition of the 'subject' and the 'object' and their attributes? Sankara declares the characteristics of Nescience in the following passages:

I 'For Avidya is born of Tamas. As partaking of the nature of a veil, Avidya—whether causing perception of what is quite the contrary of truth, or causing doubt, or causing nescience or non-perception of a truth—is a Tamasic notion, *i.e.*, a notion born of Tamas; for, on the dawn of the light of discrimination, it disappears; and (for instance) we find the three modes of Avidya—such as non-perception etc.;—arising also from Timira (an eye-disease causing dimness of sight), which is Tamasic, as partaking of the nature of a veil' (*Gita-Bhashya*, 13.2).

II '(Question): If the Self in the body does not himself act nor cause

others to act, what then is it that acts and causes others to act?

(Answer): Listen, it is nature, Svabhava, Prakriti, Maya,—the Divine Maya made up of Gunas' (*Gita-Bhashya*, 5.14).

III 'The Lord. . . controls the Maya,—belonging to him as Vishnu, the Mula-prakriti; the First Cause, composed of three Gunas' (*Gita-Bhashya*, Introduction).

IV 'Though I am unborn, though by nature my power of vision (Jnana-Sakti) is undecaying, though I am by nature the Lord of all creatures from Brahma down to grass, yet ruling over my nature—the Prakriti, the Maya of Vishnu, which is made up of the three Gunas of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, to which the whole universe is subject, and by which deluded the whole world knows not Vasudeva, its own self,—appear to be born and embodied' (*Gita-Bhashya*, 4.6).

V 'This Maya formed of Gunas, in inherent in me, Vishnu, the Lord' (*Gita-Bhashya*, 7.14).

VI 'I am veiled by Yogamaya. Yogamaya is the Maya which is none other than the Yoga or union of the three Gunas' (*Gita-Bhashya*, 7.25).

VII 'With the help of Prakriti, i.e., of Avidya, which is subject to me, I cause all these beings we now see to emanate again and again from the Prakriti, all of them being rendered powerless by Avidya and other sources of evil under the influence of the Prakriti' (*Gita-Bhashya*, 9.8).

VIII 'My Maya, i.e., the Avidya, composed of the three Gunas, produces the universe comprising the

moving and the unmoving objects' (*Gita-Bhashya*, 9.10).

The following generalizations are made by closely analysing the above passages:

(a) Nescience is made up of three energies (Gunas), viz., Sattva (goodness), Rajas (activity) and Tamas (darkness).

(b) There is room for the distinction between Nescience in its causal condition and nescience in the condition of effect. Though cause and effect are the same at the bottom, Nescience in its causal state is distinguished as the First Cause, the Mula-prakriti. Nescience in the state of effect seems to be responsible for all the errors; '*the other sources of evil under the influence of Prakriti*' (passage No. VII) must be errors in the form of non-perception, doubt and superimposed wrong-perception.

(c) Nescience in its causal condition as the first cause can be compared to Timira (eye-disease) which is also a physical cause for non-perception, doubt, and wrong-perception.

(d) The Nescience is associated with Brahman but Brahman is not effected by Nescience in any way. Brahman is the ruler and controller of his Nescience (Maya or Mula-prakriti). Brahman appears to be veiled by his own power as Maya and the whole world is unable to see the highest Self being deluded by Maya.

(e) Brahman, associated with his Maya, projects the appearance of the world phenomena in the capacity of Isvara. This Nescience constitutes the material cause of the appearance of the world.

Moreover, commenting on I: 4.3 of the *Vedanta-Sutras*, Sankara explains

that Brahman possesses potentiality of action in projecting and retracting the whole world, which in its causal condition merges in the non-distinct Maya. 'For that causal potentiality is of the nature of Nescience; it is rightly denoted by the term 'undeveloped'; it has the highest Lord for its substratum; it is of the nature of an illusion; it is a universal sleep in which are lying the transmigrating souls destitute for the time of the consciousness of their individual character.'

What is the cause of that imperfection, which, as a natural tendency of man, makes him superimpose the object on the subject? Sri Sankara replies that man's natural procedure in not distinguishing the Real and the Unreal has its cause in 'wrong knowledge'. In other words 'Adhyasa' has its cause in 'Mithyajnana'. When Sri Sankara states in the opening lines of his *Sutra-Bhashya*, that superimposition has its cause in 'wrong-knowledge', he means to distinguish the latter from the former. What constitutes that 'wrong-knowledge' is the beginningless Nescience, which as the First Cause gives rise to subsequent errors beginning with our incapacity to distinguish the subject and the object and their attributes. As we have noted elsewhere that the whole world merges and again comes forth from the non-distinct Maya, made up of three Gunas, we cannot in any way identify it with 'Superimposition', which is nothing but an effect of the primordial 'Nescience'. Hence Sri Sankara's statement that wise men consider 'superimposition' to be 'Nescience' has to be viewed in the sense that 'Avidya' is 'Adhyasa' in so far as the latter is non-distinct

from the former qualitatively. There is distinction between them, as between cause and effect, and there is no distinction between them as they are made up of the same stuff, qualitatively, springing from the same source.

If we have to give any credence to the value of tradition, we cannot ignore the conclusions of Padmapada-charya, the earliest commentator on Sankara's *Bhashya* on *Brahma-Sustras*, and Vachaspati Mishra, one of the most brilliant interpreters of Sri Sankara. According to Padmapada, the primordial Nescience is eternal and persists in the consciousness. It envelopes the consciousness like a veil, hiding the true nature. It is the material cause of the mutual superimposition of the Real and the Unreal. It is the direct cause for the appearance of the world and the world phenomena are nothing but its modification. (Cf. *Panchapadika*, 4, 13, 16, 20). According to Vachaspati Mishra, Nescience functions as non-perception of truth in its causal state, and appears as 'Superimposition' in its state of effect. The world phenomena with all its illusions is the effect of primordial Nescience. It persists even in dissolution (*Pralaya*) in a very subtle state (Cf. *Bhamati*, 16, 17, 41, 333).

In this connection it is interesting to note that Sri Ramanuja while stating Sri Sankara's view of Maya in his 'Maha-Purvapaksha' of Sri *Bhashya*, defines Avidya as the root cause for the appearance of illusions and plurality. He says, 'what constitutes that imperfection is beginningless Nescience (Avidya), which, hiding the truth of things, gives rise to manifold illusions, and cannot be

defined as something that is or as something that is not.'

From all this it is not unreasonable to conclude that this phenomenal world with all its endless distinctions is fictitiously superimposed upon the

self-luminous, homogeneous Reality; and what causes that great 'Superimposition' is the eternal, primordial Nescience, which, veiling the Reality, gives birth to manifold illusions.

BHAKTI CHAITANYA

## DIVINE LOVE AND HOW TO ATTAIN IT

In these paragraphs **Dr. M. Hafiz Syed, M.A., Ph.D., D.Lit.**, of the Allahabad University throws some light on the path of Devotion.—Ed.

It is said that God is love and love is God, and that the same love which binds man to man leads him to the source of his being. What upholds human society, what sustains human relation, is pure and simple love. If humanity were not actuated by the motive and endowed with the quality of love, there would have been no progress in its moral life. The noblest form of human love is seen in a mother's affection for her baby. As a result of pure affection for her child, she forgets herself completely—her ease and her comfort, her sleep and her food.

Almost all human virtues—sacrifice, sympathy, unselfishness, service and the like—are the direct outcome of human love. Unselfish human love is a great moral force. But for this, the world would have been the poorer. In its absence there would be no great deed, no social service, no political achievement. Almost all the heroes of the world who have achieved great things were, more or less, fired by this noble emotion.

It is the cultivation and gradual expansion of human love that leads an aspirant on to Divine love. In

the school of human relationship we are prepared for this glorious experience. If a person has never learnt to love in ordinary life, he can never understand what Divine love is and how its path is to be trodden. Those whose mind is not purified can hardly have any conception of a higher, purer, and unselfish love. Thus human love is a step to Divine love.

We find in the Hindu scriptures that the Supreme manifests Himself not only as the Lord of the Universe, but also in the human forms, and that in that form He especially arouses devotion, worship, and love, presenting all the beauty which captivates human imagination. Out of pure compassion for His creatures He comes, as it were, within the reach of their limited intelligence and presents Himself as an Avatar, manifesting in human form something of the perfection of the Supreme; because 'the difficulty of those whose minds are set on the Unmanifested and impersonal Being of God is greater and therefore hard for the embodied to reach.' According to the ancient spiritual tradition it is not possible for an average human being to have any conception of that limitless, formless, unknown, and unknowable, Reality, called Nirguna Brahman. It is only when this all-pervasive, universal Reality limits Itself in a human form,



that it becomes possible for an average man who is 'Cribbed, cabined, and confined' in a physical form to understand It.

Whether it be under the sacred name of Sri Ramachandra, Sri Krishna, or Sri Buddha, we find that humanity specially craves to worship a Being, and seeks in devotional emotion that satisfaction which no abstract conception of infinity can afford. Those are the adherents of the path of Bhakti—who seek God in His personal aspect.

What is this love that inspires him? In the words of Narada, Bhakti is 'extreme devotion to some one'. Further he says, 'It is surrendering all actions to God, and feeling the greatest misery in forgetting Him.' Now, the natural question that arises is, 'Why should one turn one's attention from human to Divine love and what would one achieve if one attained perfection in this path?' He who treads this path of Love and reaches his goal, attains union with his Beloved. In the words of Narada, 'he becomes perfect, immortal, and satisfied; he desires nothing, grieves not, hates not, does not delight in sensuous objects, makes no effort for selfish ends; he becomes intoxicated (with joy) transfixed and rejoices in the Self.' (*Narada Sutra*.)

It should be borne in mind that those who appear to us as full-fledged Bhaktas today have not become so in a day, but have reached their goal after long and persistent effort in many past lives. No effort is lost. Every longing for Divine nearness must bear its fruit in course of time. Therefore, one should not be disheartened if one does not achieve one's heart's desire all at once.

For the gradual development of Divine love certain conditions are laid down and they must be fulfilled to a great extent before Divine vision is vouchsafed to us. The first condition is intense and unquenchable desire for union with one's Chosen Ideal. Human love may serve to give us at first a faint idea of the love for the Divine. Let us think of the strongest, purest, intensest love that we may have ever felt for a human being. Let us analyse and see within ourselves how all other things become less attractive under the light of Divine Love. Whatever we care for, wealth or learning, name or fame, loses all its attraction for us when we long for nothing but the face of our Beloved. The whole attitude of our mind suddenly changes under the influence of His presence. Wealth or literature seems to be worthless as compared with the treasure of His love. Only when this one-pointed love is developed that Divine Knowledge and spiritual realization are said to be attained.

Some of the qualifications necessary for the aspirant on this path may be summed up: pure food, pure thought, and constant memory of God. We must try to be pure in thought, word, and action before we can be privileged to attain God, Who is purity itself. Therefore we should make every possible effort to take only pure food, to control our wandering mind, and to fill it with only pure and noble thoughts. We should also cease from evil ways and renounce all earthly desires. These are the essentials of spiritual progress.

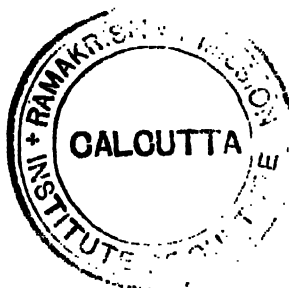
Our next endeavour should be to love and serve our fellow men as much as it lies in our power. By doing so we shall overcome our feeling of

separateness and egoism and make ourselves fit receptacles for Divine love.

There is another supreme advantage in implanting in one's heart this love of the Divine. We spend years in moral struggle in trying to overcome our vicious tendencies such as greed, anger, passion, fear, and attachment; and we seldom fully succeed in our endeavour. Sooner or later we lose our moral balance and yield to some kind of temptation. At that time we hopelessly feel that there is no cure for the ills of life. But those who are endowed with Divine love, and get themselves fully established in it, are known to overcome all their human frailties. They do not fall a prey to greed or passion. Their individual self being merged in the Divine Self, they have no desire for any earthly enjoyment. *Jalaludin Rumi* says, 'Divine love is a physician that heals all our mental and moral maladies'.

How is all this to be achieved? A soul can receive impulses only from another soul, and from nothing else. Hence the need for an enlightened Guru or guide. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, 'Every soul is destined to be perfect, and every being, in the end, will attain the state of perfection. Whatever we are now is the result of our acts and thoughts in the past; and whatever we shall be in the future will be the result of what we think and do now. But this, the shaping of our own destinies, does not preclude our receiving help from outside; nay, in the vast majority of cases such help is absolutely necessary. When it comes, the higher powers and possibilities of the soul are quickened, spiritual life is awakened, growth is animated, and man becomes holy and perfect in the end.'

M. HAFIZ SYED



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**Views and Reviews:** By SRI AUROBINDO. PUBLISHED BY SRI AUROBINDO LIBRARY, 12, KONDI CHETTY STREET, MADRAS. PRICE Re. 1-0-0.

This tiny volume is a reprint of nine articles by Sri Aurobindo from the *Arya* (1914-'20), dealing with topics of permanent interest. The treatment is able and profound, though unavoidably fragmentary, and sheds much light on the subject-matter. Every page glitters with pregnant remarks replete with innate wisdom, and gives ample evidence of a discerning and critical mind, a deft and unerring hand, and an unbiassed and catholic outlook. The style is, as usual, vigorous and at times lyrical.

Writing a decade and a half ago, the author stresses the need for a synthesis of man, and conditions have changed only for the worse now and call for a great effort for harmony. The divorce of reason and faith, of 'the logical mind and the intuitive heart', has impoverished human life by creating an insane sceptical spirit on the one hand, and a puerile sentiment on the other. To lead to 'the integrality of the inner life' science and religion must go hand in hand, because both are a quest of the unknown.

The word *Arya*, though intrinsically it expresses an effort or an achieving, first denoted a difference of culture and then a particular ethical and social ideal—'the combined ideal of the Brahmins and the Kshatriya'—, but now it is only a racial term.

In Yoga meditation is either a fixed succession of thoughts on a single subject or an exclusive concentration of the mind on a particular object. Thought sometimes tends to be 'a confused drift of ideas, sensations, and impressions'; but it can be stabilised by meditation which helps to control the workings of both mind and body and to retire from the waking state into the depths of our inner being.

Full universal consciousness must be keenly alive to the sufferings of the individuals, and must lead to infinite compassion or a spirit of beneficence. Yet it does not always express itself in external sympathy or active charity but sheds the

inner tears of the soul. To cut down a man's suffering is good; but 'to aid him to remove its roots is a still more divine helpfulness.'

Reviewing Arthur Avalon's 'Hymns to the Goddess', Sri Aurobindo points out that they express some of the characteristic Hindu conceptions of the Divine, with and without form, the Conditioned and the Absolute, and are full of the Mother's glories both in Her individual and transcendental aspects.

'South Indian Bronzes' is an exquisite exposition of Mr. O. C. Gangoly's publication of 94 plates with some letterpress, and incidentally makes a terse but telling comment on the difference between eastern and western art, and on the decline of art in India. Great art is not a mere copy of Nature but a suggestion and a symbol rather than a picture, and conceals something to tempt enquiry into its hidden soul and purpose. In the West art is taken up with the sterile formality of realism but in India it opens new windows of the soul. True to the soil, South Indian art is sacred and hierarchic and catches in bronze the lyrical outbursts of the Saivite and Vaishnavite creeds while the older sculpture has for its *motif* either the severe sublimity of the Upanishads or the spiritual epos of the Buddha. The paper on 'Rupam' also is devoted to an analysis of the fundamentals of Indian art.

In 'God, the invisible King' we get a spirited reply to a new world-order based on a pragmatism conception of the Godhead—another Utopian dream of H. G. Wells like his scientific state. The whole theory is crude and differs little in character from Muscular Christianity or the mediaeval Church and will lead to the same bigotry.

In the last article Sri Aurobindo writes about astrology from a personal as well as an objective point of view. Astrology has now become an art of the charlatan, the thought-reader, and the fortune-teller, but it cannot be dismissed as empirical or fortuitous and demands close study. He speaks about his personal experience, and his reference to his stormy political life recalls its pathos without its pain.

**Changing India:** By IQBALUNNISA HUSSAIN. PUBLISHED BY HOSALI PRESS, 6, ULBOOR ROAD, BANGALORE. PAGES vi+236. PRICE RS. 2-0-0.

This book is a collection of articles (some of which have already appeared in print) by a gifted Muslim lady whose own life is 'an epic symbol' of our rapidly changing country. It covers a wide range of topics of varying interest and importance, from 'Beggary in India' to 'A Tribute to the Deccan Times', and though primarily meant for the members of her community, it is not without a general appeal.

Islam, the author points out, aims at human brotherhood, with its principles of Ijtihad and Tawhid, which respectively stress the need for direct individual effort and the possibility of world unity, and makes no arbitrary distinction between the spiritual and the secular. But the great disparity between its theory and practice, as in the case of many other faiths, has led to the downfall of Muslims. The priests with their fanatical theology and decrepit social propriety have acted like a death's-head at the banquet and have frightened the laymen out of their wits. It is, however, gratifying to note that the masses are awakening and shaking off their lethargy and belief in old conventions and traditions which have stood in the way of progress.

In his eagerness to dominate woman, man has moulded society to suit his selfish motives, and has degraded her. Islam generally recognizes the equality of the sexes; the *purdah* (not the Indian variety, which is a cruel relic of mediæval barbarism) is meant to ensure virtue by preventing unhealthy freedom of social intercourse. The writer takes pains to prove that the Muslim faith does not sanction polygamy; but this is an open question. In her plea for the uplift of women she ruthlessly lays bare the evils that have led to their degradation—blind acceptance of worn-out formulas, *purdah*, polygamy, illiteracy, ignorance, lack of economic freedom and physical exercise, dowry, large families, and the like. She advocates a drastic change of outlook both in man and woman and commends the example of her sisters in the West.

Mrs. Hussain's views are always entitled to respect, even when we differ from them. Sometimes they betray the bigotry of a narrow creed and want of patience, and tact. She is irritated with the women of the older generation and flings sneer at them; but she forgets that they, too, were the helpless victims of an unjust social system. About men she speaks almost with the accent of the leaders of the Feminist movement. Her cause is certainly good; but her advocacy could have been more judicious, and less provoking. We need hardly remind her that the barriers of the past fall but slowly and that, in a mad desire to change, one should not be headstrong.

Mrs. Hussain swears by the communal award, which has unfortunately tended to estrange our people and threaten our national life. In pointing out the differences between Hindus and Muslims she employs the method of a casual observer, and does not make an effort to study the whole problem. Her grievances against the Hindus are of the usual type—music before mosque, idol-worship, non-violence, and even the resignation of the Congress ministry—and she invokes religion to bolster them up. We have no quarrel with Mrs. Hussain's religious convictions; but she should not forget that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. After all, she could have shown less antipathy and more tolerance. And in passing we may point out that the language, though simple and lucid, is often uneven and slipshod. The earlier chapters, however, are more readable with their racy vigour and freshness which seem to have withered away with the growth of the book. But it has a lesson for Indian womanhood who would do well to go through its contents and emulate the writer's example.

**The Fifth Dimension and The Future of Mankind:** By VERA STANLEY ALDER. PUBLISHED BY RIDER & Co., POSTERNOSTER HOUSE, POSTERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C. 4. PAGES 224. PRICE 8/6 sh. NET.

'The Fifth Dimension' is apt to sound a startling stunt, but not to scientific minds acquainted with the implications of the 'Fourth Dimension' and are thus prepared

for the next step. Sir Ambrose Fleming, one of the front-rank scientists of today, made the inspired suggestion last year that 'Heaven might possibly exist in the Fourth Dimension!' Certainly here the scientist has unknowingly over-stepped his bounds and strayed into the realm of the philosopher, to relate his science with the ultimate explanation of things, which is the end and aim of philosophy. This eagerness to synthesise science with the ultimate reality, on the part of many a western thinker and writer, may be found in the recent attempts to absorb the essentials of Indian culture into western thought.

Such a synthesis has inspired the present author also to seek entry into 'the riddle of human development, uncover the secrets of the forces that run this universe and obtain a vision of the future of mankind'.

The book is constructed in twenty-one chapters. The central theme is set forth in a chapter entitled 'The Fifth Dimension' for which the ground is prepared by the preceding chapter 'the Fourth Dimension'. The remaining chapters which fall into Parts II and III explain how the fourth and fifth dimensional forces work when brought to bear upon the reconstruction of the present conditions of life. The manifestation of the fourth dimension is defined as radiation expressing a movement which we can call 'thoroughness' as opposed to the more specific surface-covering movements belonging to the first three dimensions. Allied to this, in a way, is the fifth dimension. In her own words: 'The cause of every growing thing, the form upon which it is built, the force which holds that form in tact and the energy which causes it to grow are factors which well up from that tremendous dimension of *Withinness*, The Fifth Dimension.' And this, the writer believes, can be reached through meditation.

Indian thought offers a parallel to this in the Upanishadic Sat, or Being, which is the one all-pervading Principle that holds together the universe and creates and recreates. The realisation of this all-pervading Principle through investigation and contemplation forms the goal of Hindu philosophy and religion. The authoress evidently attempts to equate the fifth dimension with this Principle; but her approach being more scientific than philoso-

phic, the picture is not as sublime as it could be.

The fourth and fifth dimensions are allied in their essence as the manifestation of both is radiation. But the manifestation of the fourth is radiation outwards and that of the fifth inwards. If we examine the latest inventions in science, the radio, the X-ray, and the wireless and those that can be classed under the name of 'psychic', clairvoyance, clairaudience, psychometry, etc., we shall find that 'all these come under the domain of the world of radiations. The gauging of the fifth dimension of *Withinness* takes us back to the original idea and design underlying everything—the innermost essence of things. The findings of Dr. Drown that 'all living tissue which goes to make up any one organ is governed all over the world by its one key-vibration and that the tissue of the heart of the emperor, whale and fly has the same frequency and something of the same design' lay bare the secrets of the fifth dimension. With the release of the fifth-dimensional forces the authoress predicts the ushering in of a millennium on earth, 'involving the integration of all aspects of life, racial, governmental, religious, scientific and social into a gradual formation of one coherent, beautiful and symmetrical powerful whole'.

The book claims distinction as an original production and reveals the scientific mind of the writer. The get-up of the book is good.

Our Present-Day Education: BY  
HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR. PUBLISHED BY  
THE GITA PRESS, GORAKHPUR. PAGES  
76 + xxi. PRICE AS. THREE.

Education is one of the potent influences on life. The physical and spiritual health of a people is determined by the education it receives. The characteristics of nations differ widely, and what is wholesome to one may not be so to another. India and Europe, for instance, have widely divergent national characteristics. If India is now lowered spiritually and materially it is largely due to the unwholesome education she is receiving. Being pre-eminently spiritual in outlook, a completely secularised education has been suicidal to her vital interests. In the book under review the author presents a true and graphic picture

of the effects of this denationalising education, and makes a vigorous plea to give a spiritual orientation to the educational programme of the country.

In the first part of the book the author rightly points out, after the Vedas, that the true goal of education must be the deliverance from ignorance and the attainment of Bliss. To attain this goal the disciplines of the old Gurukula system (especially Brahmacharya) are to be enforced in our educational institutions. Unfortunately the spiritual ideals held aloft in that system cannot flourish in the present educational atmosphere. Restrictions in the habits of life are an anathema to the modern students, most of whom live in cities a life of ease and luxury. The blunder of supplying the same type of education for both the sexes, the author says, has wrought havoc among women engendering in them an unhealthy sense of competition with men and a morbid taste for unlimited liberty almost in line with their sisters in the West. The woman is constituted to fulfil functions quite different from those of man. And it would be disastrous if the faith that she can be truly great in her own place as a Sita or a Savitri does not bring her to her senses and put her on the right track.

In the second part of the book the author gives valuable suggestions to reorganize the present educational system in a manner that will serve India's characteristic and vital interests best. The book closes with an Appendix consisting of two parts, the first one containing relevant extracts from the Convocation Addresses given by eminent educationists in some of the Indian Universities and the second, opinions about the book.

The book deserves to be widely circulated as it gives a vivid account of the causes of the evils in our present education and practical suggestions for their cure.

**Way to God-Realization:** By HANU-MANPRASAD PODDAR. PUBLISHED BY THE GITA PRESS, GORAKHPUR. PAGES 127. PRICE AS. FOUR.

In seven nicely written chapters, the author sets forth, quite in conformity with our scriptures, the ways and means of attaining the *summum bonum* of human existence, God-Realization.

The goal towards which man moves is Divine Bliss; but this is hidden from his view and he is satisfied with the ephemeral pleasures of the world. He has to discriminate between the real and the unreal and to get dispassion for the unreal things and devote himself to the real wholeheartedly.

With this dispassion man must combine a burning aspiration to reach the goal, as aspiration is the one propelling force from the beginning to the end of man's quest after God. And again, this pilgrimage is not through a rosy path. Vigilance has to be exercised lest he should be waylaid by the sirens of scepticism, craving for publicity, contentment with partial success, and the like. The aspirant must engage himself in the prescribed spiritual practices unremittently with faith in, and reverence for his Chosen Ideal. A life of solitude is an aid to spiritual advancement; such devices afford a positive stimulus to his endeavours and hasten his progress. In the last two chapters, the author emphasizes the importance of complete surrender to the Lord's will, as this, even in the absence of other factors, is sure to bring benediction on the devotee, as often witnessed in the lives of saints.

The book forms easy reading and the author has enriched it with many an apt scriptural quotation and many a relevant episode from the lives of saints and sages. It amply repays perusal, and we look forward to more such lucid expositions of sublime truths from the author's pen.



## NEWS AND REPORTS.

### Sri Ramakrishna Math Charitable Dispensary

#### Report for the Year 1940.

The 14th Annual report of the Sri Ramakrishna Math Charitable Dispensary attests to the growing usefulness of the institution. In the first year of its existence only 970 patients were treated; in 1940 the number rose to 61,543. These figures speak for themselves. The Dispensary has no permanent fund for its upkeep, and there is a general depression in the door-to-door collections. Even in the face of these hardships it has given medical help to 12,505 new cases and 49,018 repeated cases in the Allopathic department. The Homeopathic department treated 3,715 new cases and 15,080 repeated cases, the total coming to 18,795 for the year under report. The most common of the diseases treated in the Allopathic department were those of the respiratory system, of the skin, of the Alimentary system, Influenza and other fevers, and diseases of the nervous system. During the year the Dispensary performed 1,335 minor operations of which the majority were injections.

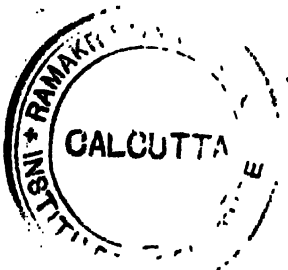
The total receipts for the year were Rs. 6,815-1-10 and the total expenses Rs. 3,725-4-0.

The Dispensary stands in need of a Permanent Endowment Fund procuring a monthly income of at least Rs. 350-0-0 in order to meet the monthly recurring expenditure. Financial help is needed also for the purchase of up-to-date medical appliances and necessary outfits for the surgical, pathological and radiological

departments. The laboratory which also is still in its humble beginnings, is in want of funds for development. It may be hoped that these requirements will be met by the generous public before long and the good work done through this permanent centre of relief will not be allowed to languish for want of support.

### The 106th Birthday Anniversary Celebration of Sri Ramakrishna at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras.

The Tithi of Sri Ramakrishna fell on the 28th of February, 1941, which was observed with special Puja, Vedic chants, Homam, Bhajana, and the distribution of *Prasada*. The public celebration came off on the next Sunday. Food consecrated to the Deity was served to over two thousand and five hundred poor and devotees. After the *Harikatha Kalakshepam* in the afternoon a meeting was convened with Mr. S. V. Ramamurti, I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, in the chair. Speeches were delivered on the life and teachings of the Master in Tamil, Telugu and English. Sri M. Ramaswami Rao Naidu, M.A., of the Pachaiappa's College, spoke in Telugu and Vidwan E. K. Natesa Sarma of the Loyola College in Tamil. Dr. V. Raghavan, M.A., Ph.D., of the Madras University read a paper on Sri Ramakrishna in English, the full text of which is published elsewhere. The meeting came to a close with a vote of thanks by Sri P. N. Srinivasachari, after which there was *Aratrikam*.















205/VED



28609

